BUFFALO'S BLACK ROCK: NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY AND THE METROPOLITAN RELATIONSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

The recent reawakened interest in neighborhoods has had a great impact on our traditional understanding of urban life. This rediscovery of the neighborhood is evident on a variety of levels. Wistful books recalling the Brooklyn of the 1950's, Williamsburg and the Lower East Side at the turn of the century, are avidly devoured by thousands of readers whose only contact with the neighborhood is vicarious. Articles appear in the Buffalo Evening News on "Irish Life in Old South Buffalo", the "Italian West Side", and in the New York Times about "Brooklyn and Queens Nostalgia". Indeed, since 1970, Murray Schumach, the city editor of that newspaper, has written several feature stories on the separate neighborhoods of New York City: "the urban shtetel in the Bronx" along Pelham Parkway; the "tranquil, stable and close-knit" College Point section of Queens, or the "little bit of Italy" in the Belmont section of the Bronx.[1] Quoting a policeman in Mt. Carmel Parish in the Bronx, Schumach noted that life in these neighborhoods is distinctly different than it is in the city beyond: "If you're from this neighborhood and you're in trouble the people will help you. They are not afraid of being involved. To them it is an obligation. This is a real neighborhood."[2]

Others have tried to create "a real neighborhood" in places where it never existed. In Buffalo, the Allentown section has undergone a recent revival as a joint effort between newly arrived young and affluent families and local civic and philanthropic groups have attempted

to create the reality and the impression of neighborhood here. There have been considerable and impressive efforts made to reinvigorate this recently moribund area. Committees have been formed, community centers organized, art shows created, and renewal funds applied for. Still more interesting than these concrete steps at making a neighborhood have been the imagistic efforts by the area's residents to create the impression of Allentown's neighborliness. There are "Allentown U.S.A." sweat-shirts, bumper stickers,and smile pins that read "I am Allentown Happy"; all calculated to produce the reaction that this, too, is "a real neighborhood."

There is nothing new about the romanticized evocation of neighborhood. Indeed, while artists and writers wrote scathing commentaries about the city itself, they lavished affectionate attention on the uban neighborhood. Painters like John Sloan, Reginald Marsh, Jerome Meyers, and William Glackens are but several of a great many American painters who have depicted the urban neighborhood as a gay, warm, and humane retreat, removed and distinct from the life of the metropolis. Similarly, it is against the backdrop of dense and teeming, yet life-giving ethnic neighborhoods, that the most exciting urban fiction has been set.

While the neighborhood has captured the nostalgic interest of many Americans bored with high-rise apartments and life in suburbia, the rise of the neighborhood has had serious political implications which threaten the governance of many cities in the country. In New York, Newark, Boston, and Buffalo neighborhood participation is being considered not only in the administration of such city services as education, sanitation, and police, but in the levying of taxes as well. Although the issue was originally pressed by blacks and Puerto Ricans

interested in controlling school boards in their neighborhoods and, as such, was opposed by many whites, neighborhood participation, or community control, has come to mean participation in decisions affecting neighborhoods on all economic levels and has, thus, become a cry akin to motherhood among office seekers in cities across the country.

Although it did not come to the public's attention until recently, the power conflict between the neighborhood and the central city has been a part of the dynamics of urban politics since the end of the nineteenth century. However, until the last few years, politicians and political theorists have regarded the neighborhood as a fractious and divisive vestige of the walking-city whose power should, if anything be diminished if the city were to function smoothly and efficiently. This has been the main goal of urban reformers throughout the century. The hope of early twentieth century progressives whc advocated such programs as at-large representation, government by commission and city manager, was the fulfillment of their vision of the city as a modern, efficient, prosperous, and well-integrated metropolitan system whose prime orientation was not towards the separate neighborhoods but rather towards the city as a whole, expecially downtown. In addition to striving to achieve the political integration of cities that had already been physically integrated by electric transit, these reformers hoped that their programs would secure for their city an image commensurate with their aspirations. Uppermost in the minds of these image and power conscious downtown reformers was the erosion of the neighborhood. For to these boosterish visionaries of urban greatness, the neighborhood enclaves of the city smacked of provincialism, of an old-world past, or immigrants and foreign accents, of corrupt political bosses not worthy of the image of modern metropolitanism.

Centralization of power continued during the Great Depression when many of the separate branches of municipal government were consolidated in the interest of economy and efficiency.[3] These changes, in addition to the obliterating effects of rapid transit and the universality of the automobile, totally eroded the traditional arrangements of the separate neighborhood so that by mid-century "the metropolitan district [had become] the neighborhood."[4]

As the neighborhood drifted from view, observers of the metropolitan scene concentrated their attention on the political struggle between suburb and city. Much was said about the conflict between suburban areas bent on preserving their suburban status-quo and cities which, pressed by pinching budgets and dwindling resources, sought metropolitan solutions to their problems.[5] Thus, while politicians and theorists recognized the struggle between separate and competing units within the metropolitan area - that is, the city versus the suburb - "the city" itself was regarded as a relatively harmonious community, free at least of the strife which plagued its relationship with the suburbs.

Yet by the late 1960's neighborhoods everywhere, like the suburbs before them, began to assert their independence from the domination of City Hall. At first, race was the motivating factor. In New York "Ocean Hill-Brownsville" and in Buffalo "BUILD" became by-words symbolizing the demands of black people for control of their neighborhoods. Mrs. Louise Hicks, Mrs. Alfreda Slominski, and Mr. Anthony Imperiale became the bitter and irate spokespeople of ethnic neighborhoods rendered powerless by "do-gooders downtown" who would prescribe massive neighborhood dislocation in the name of the welfare of the city-at-large. Anti-downtown rebellions were launched by poor and middle-class

neighborhoods alike "fed-up with decisions made on high downtown" and soon politicians began finally to realize that there was more to these cries than racial and ethnic power plays.[6] The depth of the discontent was epitomized in New York City where Mayor John V. Lindsay had been bitterly criticized as being the chief impressario of the "Manhattan Arrangement", a presumed Manhattan based anti-neighborhood approach to the city's problems. Motivated by his dislike for the Mayor as much as by his desire for change, Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller in 1971 created a commission under Stuart N. Scott of New York City whose specific mandate was to frame a proposal for the return of power to neighborhood councils.

The proceedings of the Scott Commission have revealed what intelligent observers of the urban scene have known for years. The difference was that now for the first time the proponents of neighborhood control were not black and ethnic militants but rather establishment politicians. Criticizing the steady increase of centralized power in New York City, the Borough President of Staten Island said that, "The great monolithic central government in Manhattan is light years away from the borough resident and delivering, at best, terribly expensive horse and buggy services in a jet age."[7] Similar sentiments were voiced by Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton who in March, 1972 urged the establishment of "neighborhood councils" with authority to distribute tax money for such local services as sewers, garbage collection, maintenance of streets and parks, street lighting, and neighborhood welfare centers: "New York City, like other cities of the world, has grown furious and fat, it is impersonal, slow to respond and distant from the people."[8] Indeed, all nine reports submitted to the Scott Commission called for a shared-function governmental system with power divided between "a strong

central city government and a grouping of local governments with which residents may identify."[9] The Bar Association of the City of New York suggested that "decentralization of city government might increase the quality and responsiveness of political decision making and increase the satisfaction of city residents."[10] Although some of the reports submitted to the Commission substantiate Daniel Moynihan's claim that "decentralization, just at the moment, is a fashion"[11] (for example, the countless rhetorical claims to "bring government decision-making, community planning and delivery of municipal services back to the people")[12], the depth of discontent with centralized city government cannot be denied.

Although originally limited to schools, the demand for neighborhood control in Buffalo, as in other cities, soon spread to all area's of the city's governance and what was once regarded as a by-product of racial conflict came to be viewed in its proper perspective as a major alternative to the traditional understanding of city government. How deep and all pervasive was the discontent with Buffalo's centralized and downtown administered government became fully obvious when in July, 1972 the Common Council passed with only one opposing vote a bill to enlarge the City Planning Board from seven members appointed from the city-at-large to nine members with one from each councilmanic district. Intended to strengthen the power of the neighborhood at the expense of the downtown administration, this bill like those calling for an elected school board, was anathema to these heirs of the progressive tradition eager to protect the image and reality of the city as a unified and harmonious whole. And as they had in the early years of the century, the downtown establishment - the newspapers, the administrators and the spokesmen of metropolitan progress in the downtown

community in general - rejected what they regarded as a parochial measure. Councilman William Hoyt, descendant of a highly esteemed Buffalo family and the representative of Buffalo's silk stocking Delaware District, said in casting the lone vote against the measure that members of the City Planning Board "should think on a city-wide basis and not be the representatives of a single geographic district."[13] Professional planning consultant Charles Dawson argued against the measure on the grounds that it would be "fragmenting" and hark back to "provincialism."[14] Similarly, the Buffalo Evening News was as staunch in its opposition now as it had been to similar proposals earlier in the century. Urging that Mayor Frank A. Sedita veto the measure, the News wrote that "the principle that members of Buffalo's municipal boards and commissions should represent the central city rather than the peculiar districts is sound and should be preserved."[15] Although the Mayor did veto the measure on a technicality, the message of the bill, like similar expressions from neighborhoods in cities throughout the country, cannot simply be dismissed as the "parochial passion for the status quo not worthy of serious consideration."[16]

There is no question but that the problems raised by the contemporary power struggle between city hall and the separate neighborhoods throughout the country are deeply embedded in the history of the American city. Yet, in spite of the ties that bind them, there has been no historical treatment of the neighborhood and its relationship to the rest of the city. As a unit of social organization and as an immigrant ghetto the neighborhood has been one of the most overstudied institutions of American urban life. Sociologist and historians throughout the twentieth century have written countless books dealing with neighborhoods. But these treatments - from the early American sociologist like Charles

Cooley, Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Louis Wirth through to the more contemporary writing of William Whyte, Oscar Lewis, Jane Jacobs, Oscar Handlin, Moses Rischin, and others - all deal with the neighborhood as a backdrop for a unique set of urban social activities, a separate variable removed from the workings of the rest of the city. By thus separating the organ of the neighborhood from the body of the city, these scholars have failed to treat the most essential ingredient in the formation and character of any neighborhood; that is its relationship with the city of which it is a part. For with the possible exception of Lewis Mumford's medieval neighborhood each with its own church, provision market, and water supply, the structure of urban neighborhoods and the attitudes of their residents are determined in large part by the dynamics of the city-at-large.

The interrelationship between neighborhood and city is the theme of this study. The focus of the study is Black Rock, a neighborhood in the northwestern section of the city of Buffalo, an area whose consciousness as a special place within the city - "a real neighborhood" - goes back to the early nineteenth century. Like neighborhoods today which are contesting downtown's prerogative to make decisions for them, Black Rock's consciousness as a neighborhood was at all times determined by its relationship with the downtown city. Although physically distinct from the rest of Buffalo, the neighborhood always reflected the dynamics of changes occurring downtown and it is against the backdrop of downtown that this study of Black Rock is set.

Because the neighborhood of Black Rock had originally been a lightly settled outpost of the once independent Village of Black Rock, it had a highly localistic orientation and even after it was annexed by Buffalo in 1855, Black Rock's separatism was preserved in reputation

and in fact. Here, in a self-sufficient area of several thousand people reminiscent of Mumford's medieval neighborhood, there thrived a rich and vital community life virtually beyond the pale of the rapidly growing nineteenth century metropolis. Yet in spite of the strength and independence of this local neighborhood community, downtown's attractions were compelling. Conveyed by the symbols of the modern metropolis - the skyscraper, the newspaper, and the electric trolley - the culture of downtown penetrated the barriers of the neighborhood during the last quarter of the century and led the more cosmopolitan residents there to demand that Black Rock also become modern and metropolitanized. The efforts of these self-appointed leaders of the neighborhood notwithstanding, Black Rock's orientation remained strictly local. In the early years of the twentieth century as the power and influence of the downtown city continued to grow, Black Rock's consciousness as a neighborhood, now reinforced by a leadership that had renounced its earlier metropolitan aspirations, assumed increased and more important dimensions. The components of Black Rock's neighborhood orientation, the factors responsible for the creation of a highly meaniful urban community as it strove to come to terms with itself and the rest of the city, is the subject of what follows.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS

Black Rock's existence as a separate and distinct entity within the metropolitan complex of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Buffalo is deeply rooted in its early history. For until 1855 the neighborhood was a part of the Village of Black Rock, an independent town along the Niagara River which had for at least twenty years rivaled Buffalo as the most important settlement on the Niagara Frontier. By the end of the nineteenth century these days of independence had long since passed and although hardly a footnote in Buffalo's understanding of its history, Black Rock's separate past was a component of Black Rock's perception of itself as a neighborhood in the modern metropolis.

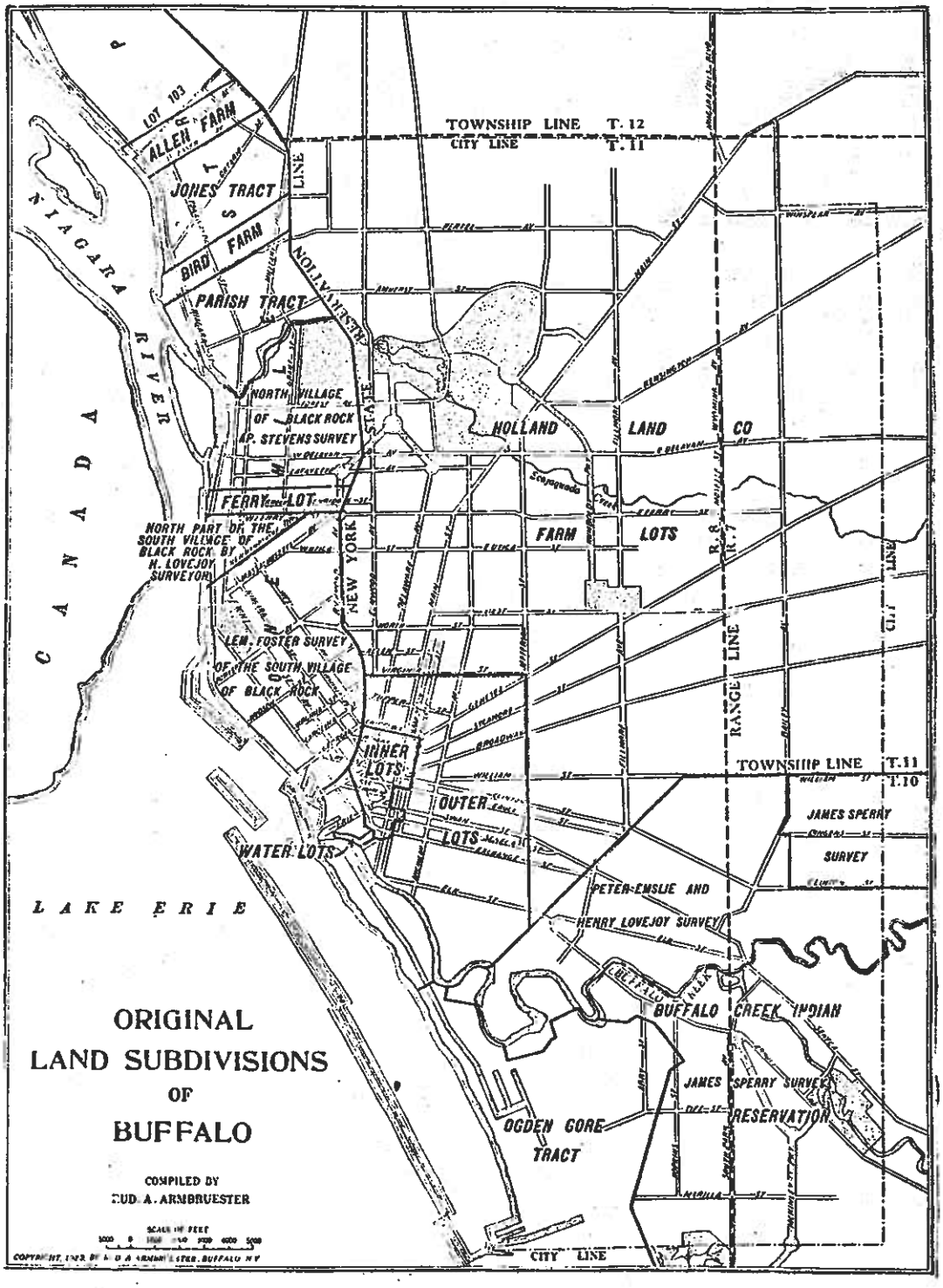
The first white man to set his eyes on the site of the future neighborhood of Black Rock was the French explorer, La Salle, who in the summer of 1679, moved his ship the Griffon up the Niagara River to the mouth of the Scajaquada Creek where in the shelter of Bird and Squaw Islands, he set sail and passed into Lake Erie.[1] Because of its location as a conduit between Lakes Erie and Ontario, the Niagara River soon became a main target of British and French settlement in the American northwest. In 1726 the French erected Fort Niagara at the mouth of the river on a bluff overlooking Lake Ontario; and during the 1760's the British built two forts up river: Fort Schlosser in Tonawanda and Fort Erie at the intersection of Lake Erie on the Canadian side of the river.[2] While the area continued to serve primarily as a point of

traverse, it is clear that the United States government had future settlement in mind when in 1784 it signed an important treaty with the Iroquois nation. "In order to secure Iroquois cooperation and make arrangements for the purchase of lands", the treaty provided that New York State would reserve a mile strip along the Niagara from the northwestern boundary of the future village of New Amsterdam to the present city line of Buffalo for the use of the Six Nations.[3] (see MAP I)

Ten years after this treaty the first major land sale along the Niagara Frontier was made when the Holland Land Company, a Dutch real estate consortium, bought over three million acres of land west of the Genesee River which came to include most all of the future city of Buffalo (New Amsterdan). In 1797, three years after this massive transaction, the Seneca Indians of the Iroquois nation gave a square mile of the land that had been reserved for them by the treaty of 1784 to Jaspar Parrish of Canandaigua, a government land agent and interpreter, as a token of gratitude for his work on the treaties between the Iroquois and New York State.[4] Soon to become part of the Village of Black Rock, the Parrish Tract was bounded by the Niagara River in the west, Scajaquada Creek in the south, the Reservation Line in the east and a line drawn just north of today's Hertel Avenue in the north.[5]

While Parrish apparently was willing to let his land remain undeveloped, the United States Army, regardless of the treaty of 1784, began to build north of the Scajaquada Creek within the mile strip reserved to the Senecas. Since the middle of the 1790's American troops had been stationed at forts along the Niagara River at: Schlosser, Niagara, and Lewistown. In 1801 another fort was built at the foot of what was to become Ferry Street. At the time the only means of trans-

MAP I


ORIGINAL
LAND SUBDIVISIONS
OF
BUFFALO
COMPILED BY
CUD. A. ARMBRUESTER
SCALE IN FEET
LAKE ERIE
CANADA
NIAGARA RIVER
LOT 103
ALLEN FARM
JONES TRACT
BIRD FARM
PARISH TRACT
MUSEUM LOT
STATE LINE
NORTH VILLAGE OF BLACK ROCK AP. STEVENS SURVEY
FERRY LOT
NORTH PART OF THE SOUTH VILLAGE OF BLACK ROCK BY H. LOVEJOY SURVEYOR
LEM. FOSTER SURVEY OF THE SOUTH VILLAGE OF BLACK ROCK
NEW YORK
INNER LOTS
OUTER LOTS
WATER LOTS
TOWNSHIP LINE T. 12
CITY LINE T. 11
HOLLAND LAND CO
FARM LOTS
R.R.
RANGE LINE
T.11
TOWNSHIP LINE T.11
T.10
JAMES SPERRY SURVEY
PETER EMSLIE AND HENRY LOVEJOY SURVEY
BUFFALO CREEK INDIAN RESERVATION
JAMES SPERRY SURVEY
OGDEN GORE TRACT
CITY LINE

porting troops from one fort to another was along the River and therefore "it became necessary to have an independent highway by land through to General Robert Wilkenson's station" at the foot of Ferry Street.[6] Under Wilkenson's orders trees were felled and bridges built over the Tonawanda and Scajaquada Creeks and by 1803 the Military Road connecting Scajaquada Creek and Fort Schlosser was completed. But no additional activity or settlement followed and for the next twenty years the area north of the Creek saw little development. In 1805, Ellicott noted that, "The Military Road had grown up with weeds and bushes that render it impassable to wagons."[7] And while the mouth of the Scajaquada Creek was to figure in Commodore Oliver Perry's Lake Erie campaigns during the War of 1812, further settlement and growth here would have to wait for the completion of the Erie Canal.

Meanwhile, the salesmanship of Joseph Ellicott was making possible the growth of Buffalo. In 1802, he was given permission by the Holland Land Company to survey and lay out a town. Houses began to appear and by 1806 the place began to look like a permanent settlement. With close to five hundred people, "there were sixteen dwellings, eight on Main Street, three on the Terrace, three on Seneca, and two on Cayuga. Serving the townfolk were two stores, three smithies, two taverns, and a drugstore. The first school was erected for $157.37 on the southwest corner of Pearl and Swan in 1808. A 'grammar' school was opened in 1810 or 1811 in the courthouse built when the village became the county seat for Niagara County. The courthouse also furnished a meeting place for the 'Congregational and Presbyterian Church' and was organized in 1812. Just to the south stood a sturdy stone jail."[8]

One of the reasons Ellicott had been so eager to lay out his town was his fear that New York State would soon open to settlement the

mile strip reserved to the Senecas in 1784. For as long as no town was started here, Buffalo's dominance of the area would be assured. Yet, his worst fears were realized in 1805 when the state legislature passed a law allowing for the sale of lands in the "Village of Black Rock".[9] At that time, that part of the village between Buffalo and the Scajaquada Creek, known as Upper Black Rock, consisted simply of a ferry station, a tavern, and a general store all owned by one Benjamin Barton and Peter B. Porter, a Niagara Falls lawyer and the younger brother of Augustus, the first judge of Niagara County.[10] Banking on the future of this settlement, Porter built a home on Ferry Street overlooking the Niagara and the first clusters of a village began to form around his dock and ferry station.[11] As builders and owners of lake vessels, the shipping firm of Porter and Barton supplied the forts along the Niagara with meat, bread flour, liquor, and salt.[12] It was this business which gave substance to Ellicott's anxieties and soon made Black Rock a rival of no small consequence to Buffalo.

Centered around Porter's domain at the foot of Ferry Street, Black Rock's early growth was due primarily to the efforts of its leading citizen, Porter, since 1808 the congressman from the Western District of New York. Using his friendship with President James Madison and his power as a member of the House Committee on Foreign Relations, Porter did what he could to advance the interests of his adopted village. Although he failed to have the customs house permanently removed here from Buffalo, he was able to effect a compromise whereby Black Rock would be the port of entry from April to December and Buffalo the rest of the year. Black Rock's success in this venture must certainly have troubled the boosters of Buffalo for, considering that there was little lake traffic during the winter months, they could not have been pleased with the results

of this bargain.

But what most worried the promoters of Buffalo was Black Rock's superior harbor. Black Rock had none of the problems that plagued those Buffalonians eager for their town's growth. These men knew that as long as the existence of the long sand bar at the mouth of the Buffalo Creek prevented large-keeled ships from approaching the mouth of the harbor, Buffalo's port would have no chance of ever competing with that of Black Rock. Buffalo's problems were compounded following the War of 1812 by the almost total destruction it had suffered during the British attack of 1813. Black Rock meanwhile, "was again busy forwarding [goods] and building ships."[13] When in 1818 the "Walk in the Water", the first steamboat to sail on the Great Lakes was launched, its New York City owners chose Black Rock over Buffalo as its port of embarkation.[14] This event, coming one year after the plans for the Erie Canal were finally drawn and actual excavation had begun, seemed clear indication that Black Rock had won a crucial round in its struggle with Buffalo to secure for itself the western terminus of the Canal. Yet, Buffalonians, led by Samuel Wilkeson and others fought back, and in 1819 the State Legislature loaned that village $12,000, with payment guaranteed by Judge Wilkeson, to clear its harbor.[15] With Black Rock's aspirations now threatened, businessmen in that village led by the omnipresent Porter, began their own campaign to secure the canal terminus and between 1819 and 1823 rival newspapers, political leaders and businessmen engaged in a prototypical urban rivalry for commercial supremacy resulting in the selection of Buffalo as the terminus for the Canal.[16]

Lower Black Rock, the area that had included the Parrish Tract, isolated as it was north of the Scajaquada Creek, remained

unsettled in spite of the activities that had been taking place in Upper Black Rock and Buffalo. In 1806, when the Village of Black Rock was first opened to settlement, there were only two squatter families living along the Creek.[17] While former Congressman, then General, Porter had used the mouth of the Creek as a launching spot for three battle ships during the War of 1812, there was no mention of the area following the War in any of the contemporary or historical works. Lower Black Rock would have to wait for the completion of the Canal before it became a settlement in its own right.

While the location of the Canal terminus in Buffalo dashed any hopes that Black Rock may have had of overtaking Buffalo, the Canal, which entered the Niagara River at Ellicott Creek and wound its way southward along the river to Buffalo, was responsible for the first burst of activity in the area north of the Scajaquada Creek known as Lower Black Rock. In addition to the location of a lock at the foot of Austin Street, (originally known as Lock Street),[18] which laid the foundations for commercial growth here, the force of the water in the locks created by the Canal generated sufficient power so as to make milling profitable.[19] The first of several mills was open in 1831 by William Porter, a nephew of Peter and Robert MacPherson, both absentee owners from Upper Black Rock, who built their mill on the towpath at the foot of Amherst Street. Five years later one Samuel W. Howell, recently arrived in Black Rock from New Jersey, built another flour mill slightly up the towpath near Austin. Fourteen years later James Thornton and Thomas Chester, like Howell, both residents of Black Rock, added a cooperage on the towpath between the growing street of Amherst and Austin.[20]

Although the Black Rock Advocate, an Upper Black Rock newspaper, did not even mention the area north of the Scajaquada Creek in its "Prospects for Black Rock in 1837", the area was clearly growing under the impact of the Canal.[21] In 1838 one A. A. Justin built an iron forge on the canal towpath at the foot of Hamilton Street and by the early 1840's the activity of the Canal at the towpath had attracted Burckhardt's Saw Mill at the foot of Bird Avenue (later Hertel Avenue) and Elisha Safford's Stave Factory at the foot of Hamilton. Meanwhile, the northern banks of the Creek had become the site of James Chase's cooperage, Thomas Thompson's Shingle Factory, and James Parson's saw mill.[22] These small manufactories led to the establishment of several stores catering to the needs of the people living and working in the area. There was Bennet and Manley's grocery and saloon in a four storey brick building still standing at Niagara and Amherst, while Stephen Howell, the miller, owned a general store on the ground floor of his large brick home across the street on the northeast corner of this intersection.[23] The evidence of this early commercial growth remains to this day in the several Federal-style brick buildings which still stand along Niagara Street between Amherst and Austin streets.

By 1855, the year of Black Rock's annexation by Buffalo, the population of Lower Black Rock, that area north of the Creek, was approximately 1400, the great majority of whom lived in the vicinity of the intersection of Amherst and Niagara streets.[24] The ethnic composition of the neighborhood was similar to the rest of the city. Here, too, native-born Americans (restricting the count to heads of families rather than including native-born children of immigrants) were in the minority with 26% of the adult population as opposed to 23% in the

city-at-large. Germans predominated here with 42% of the adult population as they did in all of Buffalo with 39%, while the Irish made up 11% in Black Rock, slightly below their 18% of the city's total population.[25] As Glasco has shown in his study of ethnicity in mid-nineteenth century Buffalo, the greatest number of the city's residents were recent arrivals regardless of nationality. Irish and German heads of families had been here an average of seven and eight years, respectively, while native-born family heads averaged twelve years in Buffalo.[26] Black Rock reflected the newness of the city's population. Indeed, of the 1400 people listed in the Census of 1855, only twenty-seven had been in Black Rock for more than twenty years and none for more than twenty-five years.[27]

A closer look at some of the older settlers provides more understanding as to how this newest section of the city developed during the middle of the nineteenth century. Whether or not they were prosperous on arrival, it is clear that the four men who had been in Black Rock longest - two native Americans and two Germans - had achieved quite a large measure of success by 1855. A. A. Justin had come from Connecticut in 1830 and opened a wagon shop on the Canal towpath near Amherst Street. By 1855 his cooperage capitalized at under $2000 and employing seven men, was typical of the small businesses of the area.[28] Christopher Laible had come from Germany in 1830 when he was thirteen years old. Although it is not clear how he got the money, by 1855 he was the owner of a grocery on Amherst Street. The income which he earned from this enterprise had enabled him to buy a $2500 brick home, one of the few in the neighborhood.[29] Unlike Laible, John Druar, a German born grocer who had also come to Black Rock in 1830, had four children. Perhaps it was for this reason that in spite of his length of

CHART I

POPULATION OF BLACK ROCK* AND BUFFALO,** 1855-1915

Black Rock	Buffalo
1355: 1400	1855: 74,214
1865: 1740	1865: 94,210
1875: 2200	1875: 135,557
1892: 3170	1892: 278,727
1905: 3620	1905: 376,587
1915: 3970	1915: 454,630

*Estimated to the closet unit of ten from the New York State Manuscfipt Census, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, and 1915 in the Record Room of the County Clerk's Office, Old Erie County Building, Buffalo, New York.

**These are the exact figures taken from the same Census Manuscripts as above.

time in Black Rock and his ownership of a grocery store at Amherst and Niagara, the Druars lived in an inexpensive frame home.[30]

Of these older settlers none was more successful than Samuel W. Howell. Born in New Jersey in 1801, Howell like the others came to Black Rock in 1830, a banner year for settlement here. Within six years he had taken himself an Irish wife, possibly an indication of his own humble origins, and had gone into the milling business. By 1855 he had expanded his operations considerably: his mill on the towpath was capitalized at over $40,000 and employed a dozen hands. Another Howell enterprise, a barrel factory, turned out close to 150 barrels per week and his grocery on the ground floor of his $3000 brick home on Amherst and Dearborn catered to the everyday needs of the neighborhood.[31] If there was any doubt that Howell was an important man in the neighborhood it was dispelled when in 1855 he became the first resident of Black Rock to represent the neighborhood in the newly reconstituted Common Council of Buffalo.[32]

There was also a class of shop-keepers and skilled laborers in Black Rock who had come to enjoy some measure of success. Some - like Christian Guenther, a baker who lived above his shop on Niagara Street, Frank Balthasar and Ullrich Eimiller, two coopers, Simon Burkhardt, a tavern-keeper, and Jacob Schneggenburger, a carpenter - were Germans.[33] Among this relatively prosperous burgher class were seventeen native American shop-keepers and 106 skilled workers.[34] Studying the city-at-large Glasco has found that "length of residence did not alter significantly one's occupational chances. . ."[35] Thus, varying lengths of time in the area and a diversity of ethnic groups characterized the 212 laborers working in Black Rock's twelve factories and the 423 day laborers who found work when and where they could.

John Growley was an American born laborer who came to Black Rock from another part of Erie County in 1841. He married a local girl and in 1855 he was a day laborer sharing a rented home with the family of Andrew Falk, also a native American day laborer.[36] The story of William Slocum is similar to that of other property-less native laborers. Slocum came to Black Rock from Dutchess County in 1843. Twelve years later, the year of the State Census of 1855, he was working as a laborer and lived with his family in a rented flat at the corner of Amherst and Tonawanda.[37]

When a common laborer, regardless of nationality, did own his own home it was usually because he had taken in boarders. James and Isabella Morton, both of Canandaigua, New York were twenty-eight years old when the census take came around in 1855.[36] Although they had lived in Black Rock for only three years, far less than the majority of the neighborhood, they could report that the $800 frome house they lived in with five Irish boarders was their own.[39]

The Irish were the most disadvantaged nationality group in Black Rock. In 1855 the Irish headed families constituted 11% of the population of the neighborhood, a greater proportion than at any other time during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, yet there were very few who did not serve in the ranks of the common laborers. Black Rock's Irish occupied the cheapest homes in the neighborhood; and by far the greatest number of them were tenants. The family of Daniel Lanahan is characteristic of the Irish population of the neighborhood. Lanahan came from Ireland with his family of six in 1849.[40] He lived (and most likely worked) on the Canal towpath near Hamilton Street where he shared a home valued at $50 (an incredibly low figure even for his lot) with Robert O'Neil, another Irishman, and his six-member

family. When an Irish laborer did own his own home he did so at the price of heinous over-crowding. One Alex McCrary owned a $500 frame house on the towpath near Bird Avenue which he shared with five other Irish families: a total of twenty-one people in the one wooden dwelling.[41]

In spite of a large working-class population it was the middle class which defined the neighborhood and by the middle of the nineteenth century there existed in this northern section of the former Village of Black Rock a small and upwardly mobile middle class of native American and German shopkeepers and small manufacturers. Indeed, by 1855 the area was one of the more industrialized in the city.[42] All of these operations were small in scale with an average capitalization of $3000, employing an average of one dozen men at wages ranging between $22 and $33 per month.[43] The most important aspect of Black Rock's economic growth was the fact that with but one exception - the New York Central's Car Company, a railroad car manufactory employing fifty men - all of Black Rock's factories were locally owned. This, plus their location in an area far removed from the more developed section of the former Village of Black Rock in the vicinity of Niagara and Ferry streets and its distance from the rapidly growing hub in downtown Buffalo meant that Black Rock's economy and the people who ran it were largely independent. Thus, by 1855, almost twenty years before the arrival in the neighborhood of large, outsider-owned factories, there existed a fully developed, largely independent, locally oriented middle class, a factor of considerable significance in the development of neighborhood consciousness in Black Rock.

If isolation and independence had produced a separate and locally-owned economy in Lower Black Rock, it had also created a separate and independent institutional and social life here. In 1844 the first

church in Lower Black Rock, the Riverside Methodist, was built on Dearborn Street.[44] By 1851 two other German Protestant churches were formed: the North Buffalo Baptist Church opened on Dearborn in 1850 and the German Evangelical Church at Amherst and Thompson a year later.[45]

Catholic chuch activities in pre-annexation Black Rock were more problematical. Until St. Francis Xavier German Catholic Church was founded in 1849, the Catholics of Black Rock, the largest religious group in the neighborhood, had no church of their own.[46] Indeed, the nearest Roman Catholic church was St. Louis Church on Main and Tupper Streets in downtown Buffalo. What this suggests is that those people who were willing to make the long walk from Black Rock to the church had considerable contact with the world beyond their own neighborhood. And while they wasted little time in forming their own congregation on Amherst and East Streets, the weekly experiences in the big city was not to be lost on the indeterminate number of Black Rock German Catholics who made the trip.

Thus, by mid-century Lower Black Rock had grown in spite of its apparent handicaps: the failure of the Village of Black Rock to secure the Canal terminus and the area's isolation form the larger centers of population in Upper Black Rock and Buffalo. While there are no available figures dealing with the population of the whole Village at the time of Annexation, there can be no question but that Black Rock's growth could not compare with the tremendous activity that characterized mid-century Buffalo. Between 1820 and 1830, Buffalo's population went from 2095 to 8653, an increase of more than 5300. Its population continued to grow over the next twenty years and by 1855 there were more than 40,000 people living between the Buffalo Creek and Porter Avenue, the northern and southern limits of the city.[47] Such rapid

expansion made the annexation of Black Rock inevitable.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the annexation of Black Rock in 1855 is its inconsequential place in Buffalo's understanding of its own history. Indeed, both contemporary and historical sources are strangely silent on the question of annexation. While the local press and the historical works which mention the Charter of 1854 have given some attention to its provisions establishing the popular election of the mayor and the division of the city into thirteen instead of five wards in none of the accounts is there any discussion of the annexation itself. Although there had been two Black Rock newspapers (both printed by and for the people of Upper Black Rock, the area south of the Creek) during the 1820's and 1830's, there were none at the time of the annexation . Similarly, none of the newspapers of downtown Buffalo dealt with the dynamics of the annexation decision now with the reactions of the citizens in either place to this pivotal event in the neighborhood's history. There was not even a description of what the annexed territory was like. The two narrative treatments of Buffalo history, both written during the early twentieth century, bypassed annexation almost completely. Josephus Larned writes: "The year 1854 brought to Buffalo a new form of government. It was as distinct a milestone in the City's progress as was 1832, the year of incorporation." Almost as an afterthought he adds: "The City was enlarged by annexing Black Rock, the number of wards increased from five to thirteen, of aldermen from ten to twenty-five."[48] Hill, the other early twentieth century chronicler of local events, is even more terse: "The revised Charter of 1854 annexed the Village of Black Rock to the City of Buffalo and divided the City into thirteen wards each electing two aldermen to the Common Council."[49]

The absence of a fuller treatment of annexation is due not to historical negligence but rather to an attitude about the city held by both contemporary journalists and latter-day historians. For during the mid-nineteenth century as well as during the early twentieth, the extension of the metropolitan area and the increased dominance of downtown were so taken for granted that there simply was never any doubt but that independent places like Black Rock would and should be annexed. Yet, by ignoring the phenomenon of annexation - the absorption of separate and independent areas into the framework of the metropolis - chroniclers then and later failed to grasp a critical aspect of the dynamics of the city's history and an essential ingredient of its emerging structure.

In the absence of concrete evidence it is still possible to surmise what went on in Black Rock and Buffalo during the years leading up to annexation. While the Canal had brought some commercial growth to Upper Black Rock and was totally responsible for the initial development of the section north of the Scajaquada Creek, these starts were tarnished by the Panic of 1837. The hopes that had inspired boosterish editorials like that in the Black Rock Advocate in the early 1830's - "Our village is daily assuming the appearance of prosperity. The quiet of our hitherto deserted streets will in a short time be exchanged for the din and bustle of a manufacturing town" - were dashed by the prolonged depression.[50] Thus, in spite of the early growth around Porter and Barton's dock and the more recent commercial activity north of the Scajaquada Creek in Lower Black Rock, the hoped for prosperity had never materialized and on the eve of its dissolution in 1845 the Advocate, once the boosterish organ of a proud and independent village predicted annexation: "We believe that the interest of Black Rock and Buffalo are

identical in relation to the important questions of our time and will in the course of a few years time be united into one great and harmonious City."[51]

Perhaps it was natural that Upper Black Rock, directly adjacent to Buffalo, would opt for annexation. But that Lower Black Rock not only acquiesced but probably even welcomed their inclusion in Buffalo is more surprising given the area's isolation and separate development. While there were certainly tangible questions of self-interest involved - not only had Black Rock run the limits of its potential growth as an independent town but it was more than $2000 in debt and annexation meant assumption of these debts by Buffalo[52] - there were also less concrete but highly meaningful reasons for both sections of Black Rock to desire annexation. The commercial growth of Buffalo over the past years had been staggering. By the 1850's it was one of the major railroading centers in the nation: in 1853 four railroad systems terminated or began in Buffalo and in 1853 the New York Central consolidated the several separate lines connecting Buffalo and Albany.[53] In addition it had become the leading flour and grain center in the country. By 1855 the grain elevators on the Buffalo Creek alone could store and elevate a total of 1.5 million bushels per hour.[54] Buffalo offered other tantalizing downtown attractions: there were a total of seventeen newspapers in the city, a Young Men's Association, a German Y.M.A., a fire department, a post office system, a school system, fifteen banks, and a board of trade.[55] Added to the lure of these commercial and cultural developments was the fact that Buffalo had gained national recognition as its leading citizen, Millard Fillmore, had just left the White House following an unprecended period of national expansion.

Thus, the people of Black Rock viewed annexation not as a result of the area's weakness and failure, but rather as testimony to the greatness and success of Buffalo. The Queen City's development and national prominence was not lost on the people of Black Rock. Indeed, the opportunity to become a part of this booming metropolis was probably the fulfillment of a long cherished hope for enterprising merchants like Stephen Howell and others who had struggled for years to make their businesses successful. And now, would not Black Rock, as a section of Buffalo, reap the same advantages that occurred to the city-at-large? For years the people of Black Rock had lived in the shadow of their more prominent rival; for years the German Catholics who had journeyed weekly to St. Louis Church had been witness to the greater prosperity of that city. For the burghers of Black Rock, not withstanding their independent economic and institutional life, were products of mid-nineteenth century urban America, a society, as Boorstin described it, characterized by "the dynamic American urbanism in the period of [the nation's] greatest growth."[56] Thus, they too had absorbed the assumptions of the time and, therefore, welcomed the extension of the dominant metropolitan culture of downtown as part of the natural course of events.

Still another reason why Black Rock welcomed union with Buffalo was that the annexation Charter of 1854 made it possible for Lower Black Rock to become a part of metropolitan Buffalo while still remaining its essentially localistic orientation. As the adjoining map of Buffalo in 1855 clearly demonstrates, there had been tremendous outward expansion of the city since the completion of the Erie Canal. From the three separate and isolated settlements of the 1820's - Buffalo, Upper Black Rock situated between Georgia Street in the south and the Scajaquada Creek in the north, and Lower Black Rock north of the Creek - the area

MAP II

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
REFERENCED HOTELS
CANADA WEST
COMPTON'S
POCKET MAP
OF THE
CITY OF BUFFALO.
Published by
W. J. Compton Lithographer &c.
209 Main St.
BUFFALO.
1855.

was now incorporated, at least legally, into one urban unit. Yet, in spite of this legal metropolitanization it was to be years before the demographic, economic, technological, and political developments of the city would give substance to what was still a metropolis in bare outline only. However, it was this semi-integrated state of metropolitan growth that was perfectly suited to Lower Black Rock for it enabled the neighborhood to become legally a part of the growing city while at the same time enabling the area to preserve its tradition of isolation and independence. The people of Black Rock could, therefore, welcome the opportunity to become part of the promise that was Buffalo's future without fear that the structure of the neighborhood would be seriously altered.

In one crucial way at least, Black Rock was permitted to perpetuate its independent characteristics. For not only did the Charter of 1855 divide the city-at-large into thirteen separate wards but it divided the former Village of Black Rock in half at the Scajaquada Creek and thereby kept the neighborhood north of the Creek politically in tact, a fact of considerable importance if we are to understand the attitudes toward the rest of the city that were to develop here.

The two wards created out of the Village were the eleventh: Upper Black Rock from Porter Street to the Scajaquada Creek, and the twelfth: Lower Black Rock, bounded by the Creek, the Niagara River, the City Line in the north and the intersection of Main Street and Delevan Avenue in the east.[57] While it is possible that the decision to cut the Village in half had to do with fears that if left intact Black Rock might exert an unduly strong influence in Buffalo government, it is more than likely that the authors of the Charter were simply following the boundaries of nature and the existing settlement patterns, both of

which led to the conclusion that Upper and Lower Black Rock were connected in name only. The Charter then, did politically what nature and the patterns of settlement had already achieved: the isolation and insularity of Lower Black Rock. For Lower Black Rock was even distinct from the rest of the territory in the twelfth ward which in 1854 was largely unsettled farm land.[58] This separation of Lower Black Rock proved to be a mixed blessing for the neighborhood. On one hand it enabled Black Rock, the most populous section of the twelfth ward, to dominate the ward's delegation to the City Council. Yet, by keeping the area distinct and separate, the Charter of 1854 laid the groundwork for the development of a highly parochial, neighborhood oriented outlook here.

Thus, in spite of its inclusion within the boundaries of Buffalo, the events of the next twenty years did little to alter Black Rock's isolated and quasi independent condition. While its population grew from approximately 1400 in 1855 to approximately 1740 in 1866, and approximately 2200 in 1875, and while the number of American born residents continued to increase at the expense of those born abroad, (see Chart II), there was little change in the structure of the neighborhood. Even the Common Council's decision in 1860 to extend the Niagara Street horse-car route from Ferry Street north to Amherst Street in the heart of Lower Black Rock had little impact on the neighborhood's isolation for as late as 1865 the State Census enumerator reported that a mere eight people in the whole neighborhood commuted to Buffalo to work.[59] The main reason for the continued preservation of Black Rock's local identity in an increasingly metropolitan age was that the neighborhood enjoyed a highly localized economy. This was even more true by 1875 for by then, in addition to the nineteen locally-owned and

CHART II

NATIONALITY OF HEADS OF FAMILIES IN BLACK ROCK, 1855-1915

	US	GERMAN	IRISH	FRENCH	CANADIAN	ENGLISH	POLISH	HUNGARIAN
1855	26%	42%	11%	2%	4%	8%	-	-
1875	27%	45%	6%	5%	7%	10%	-	-
1892	43%	33%	6%	1%	9.5%	7.5%	-	-
1905	56%	21%	6%	-	10.5%	4.5%	1%	.5%
1915	60%	19%	5.5%	-	8.5%	4%	2%	1%

Source: Manuscript of the New York State Census, 1855, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915

four outside owned factories together employing more than five hundred men and women, the relocation of the Pratt and Letchworth Iron Works in 1866 to the banks of the Scajaquada Creek from its original site in downtown Buffalo now provided employment to 450 more residents of Black Rock.[60]

Thus, on the eve of the rapid urbanization that was to occur during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the neighborhood in Black Rock north of the Scajaquada Creek remained an isolated, largely self-sufficient "island community". In addition to its physical location and the existence of adequate industrial employment, Black Rock's consciousness as a separate entity was reinforced by its awareness of its separate history: that there had once been a village named Black Rock which in the days before the completion of the Erie Canal had been a robust rival of Buffalo. That the area north of the Creek now known as Black Rock was hardly settled and in no way involved with Upper Black Rock's early nineteenth century rivalry with Buffalo does not detract from the importance of those early years to the people who came to live north of the Creek. For even though none of the residents of late nineteenth century Black Rock had experienced those great might-have-been days of Black Rock history, the rivalry with Buffalo over the Canal became an important part of the neighborhood's consciousness. Indeed, if there is one fact that a contemporary resident of Black Rock knows about the history of Buffalo it is that there was once a time when a separate town called Black Rock came close to becoming the Queen City of the Lakes. Thus, this event, experienced by none of the latter-day residents, in an area whose only resemblance to the Black Rock of old was its name, became part of the neighborhood mythology, a source

of collective pride and community strength to generations of future residents as the neighborhood changed in the years ahead.

CHAPTER II

HOW CHANGES IN BLACK ROCK BETWEEN 1875 AND 1885 BROUGHT ABOUT A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

In March, 1886 a fire spread through the heart of Black Rock. Originating on the Canal towpath, it caused considerable damage on Niagara Street, the area's only arterial connection with the rest of the city and the main thoroughfare in the neighborhood.[1] The fire clearly had a great impact on Black Rock. Within a week, Alfred Tovey, a young Canadian recently settled in Black Rock, began printing the International Gazette, a local paper not withstanding its ambitious name. Moreover, by the first of April a group of young businessmen calling themselves the Black Rock Businessmen's Association, had held their first meeting. For these men the fire was symptomatic of Black Rock's ambiguous position in its relationship to the rest of the city. As we saw earlier, the provisions of the annexation charter of 1855 had enabled Black Rock (that is, that part of the former Village north of the Scajaquada Creek) to preserve virtually intact its village-like isolation and independence. While this arrangement seemed satisfactory to the great majority of people in the neighborhood, it had serious drawbacks. For as long as Black Rock remained beyond the pale of the political and business establishment of downtown Buffalo, it remained an afterthought, an insignificant settlement in the outlying area of the city. The fire, however, ended Black Rock's apathy regarding its status in the metropolis and in the very first edition of his Gazette, Tovey dedicated himself to uplifting his newly adopted neighborhood.

Had there only been a fire station in Black Rock, Tovey wrote, or at least one nearer than station number five on the other side of the Creek; had the bridge over the Creek been in better condition, had the streets only been paved, the fire would not have caused nearly as much damage. As Tovey saw it then, the damage caused by the fire was due to Black Rock's isolation, a condition which made it possible for the downtown politicians to ignore the neighborhood in the matter of the delivery of vital urban services. Because it occurred at a time when the economic forces of urbanization were causing a major upheaval within Black Rock, the fire triggered the first conscious acts of neighborhood soul-searching, and the first attempt by the community to define itself and its relationship to the city-at-large. Yet the fire reflected only a small shadow of what was troubling the men behind these two new organs of neighborhood opinion - the Gazette and the Businessmen's Association. For by 1886 the economic and institutional structure of metropolitan Buffalo had so changed that the traditional assumptions and foundations of the neighborhood were being threatened from every direction. It was the desire of the more articulate men of the neighborhood to exercise greater control and direction over these changes that led them to organize.

Nothing had changed more since annexation than Black Rock's economy, for in the years following the Civil War the spread of railroads to the city-at-large had brought the economy of the neighborhood under the increasing domination of large, absentee-owned factories. Black Rock had been a railroad center ever since the 1830's when the New York Central crossed at Amherst and Tonawanda Streets on its way to Niagara Falls. Until 1878 this was the only railroad in the area.[2] The completion of the International Bridge in 1873, a railroad bridge

to Canada built by the Grand Trunk Railroad, resulted in the construction of several new lines all of which cut through Black Rock at the Amherst-Tonawanda intersection. By 1884 there were six new rail lines and three freight and passenger stations at this node.[3] Another railroad development crucial to the industrial growth of not only Black Rock but of the Polish Parish soon to develop adjacent to Black Rock east of Tonawanda and Amherst Streets, was the completion in 1883 of the Belt Line Railroad. This line, an intra-urban freight and commuter railroad, followed the tracks of the New York Central along its northern course up the Niagara River front, turned east between Amherst and Hertel and headed east as far as the City Line where it turned south completing its circle of the city in downtown Buffalo.[4] Thus, by the mid-1880's Black Rock had extensive passenger and freight connections with the rest of the city for the first time in its history.

The completion of this railroad network began an industrial boom in the area resulting in the location in and around Black Rock of thirteen new factories by 1892.[5] In 1883 the Pratt and Letchworth iron plant expanded its operation considerably. The next year the Buffalo Smelting Works opened and with its 275 employees was second in size only to Pratt and Letchworth.[6] Others followed: the North Buffalo Planing Mill, the Buffalo Steam Forge Company and the North Buffalo Plush Factory, all located just east of the tracks at Tonawanda Street and all employing over one hundred men.[7] The arrival of Polish immigrants east of the tracks at Tonawanda added to the incentives of manufacturers in search of a cheap labor supply and a well-developed railroad network and in the five years between 1887 and 1892 ten more companies located here.[8]

Tovey for one, greeted these changes from the point of view

of a neighborhood booster eager for the growth of his community. In an editorial typical of urban enthusiasts everywhere, he glowingly reported that, "The first robin was here and went away again, for so many changes have taken place in Black Rock he thought that he had made a mistake."[9] The downtown business establishment, however, perceived the industrialization of Black Rock differently. For what Tovey viewed as an indication of local strength and prosperity, the downtown community regarded as the inevitable extension of Buffalo's industrial economy to still another section of the city. This attitude was summed up by the Commercial Advertiser in 1887: "That Buffalo is growing and her industrial interest expanding is shown by the many recent purchases of land in Black Rock for manufacturing purposes."[10]

//It is important to note, however, that the arrival of large factories in Black Rock did not erode the self-sufficient economic relationships traditionally characteristic of the neighborhood for there was a profusion of small stores and a concommitant growth of a local middle-class in the wake of industrialization which served to reinforce Black Rock's localistic orientation. Thus, the opening of at least twenty-three new stores here between 1886 and 1892 was a development of critical importance to Black Rock's consciousness as a separate and independent neighborhood; for unlike the factories mentioned above, these groceries, taverns, meat markets, confectionaries, and variety stores were all locally owned.[11]//

Tovey greeted the opening of these local establishments with an enthusiasm not found in his one-line announcements noting the arrival of the factories. He was proud of Fred Munch, the neighborhood's first undertaker, whose location at Niagara and Amherst meant that "our citizens will no longer have to send long distances for an undertaker."[12]

Tovey called attention to E. D. Smith's poultry and meat market, which opened in the spring of 1889 and stocked "as full and complete a selection of meats as can be found at the Chippewa Street Market" in downtown Buffalo.[13] In the newly completed Hatch Block, three attached brick buildings on the southeast corner of Amherst and Niagara in the heart of the neighborhood built by J. H. Hatch, a local realtor, was George New's Clothing Store, Shoeman's Furniture Emporium, Galliard's Hardware, William McHenry's Dry Goods, and Fred Ebling's barbershop.[14] On Amherst Street between East and Niagara could be found several other new businesses: Wunsch's Photography Studio, Frank Monnen the Mover, Basler's Greenhouse, Roesch's Ice Cream Parlor, Zirnheld's Grocery, and Volber's Confectionary, to name but a few.[15] Also in this area of growing activity was Burkhardt's Stationery Store in which, Tovey boasted, was located the only telegraph in the neighborhood "for the convenience of Burkhardt's neighbors".[16] Apparently satisfied that the proliferation of locally owned stores had made Black Rock more self-sufficient than ever, Tovey announced triumphantly in 1889 that "no section in the city of Buffalo is as fully equipped as is Black Rock with a full range of stores and small businesses catering to the householder's every need."[17]

Thus, by the mid-1880's the economy of the neighborhood functioned on two distinctly different levels. On one hand the spread of industrialization had brought Black Rock under the influence of the downtown business community. Yet, on the other, the small-store economy of the neighborhood was greatly strengthened. This is an important distinction because it meant that the middle-class store owners of the neighborhood had not been absorbed by the metropolitanization of the city's industrial life. This was to have important consequences for the

future of the neighborhood.

The small-store economy was not the only component of Black Rock life which increased its local rootedness, for during the same period religious, social, and political life became even more locally oriented than it had been earlier. Church activity provides an excellent illustration of this phenomenon.

We have already seen that in spite of the large population growth in Black Rock between 1855 and 1875, there were no new churches built nor new congregations formed here. But between 1876 and 1887, six new churches appeared in the neighborhood.[18] More important in the development of the neighborhood's consciousness than the actual construction of these churches was the change in church leadership which occurred during these years. By 1887, for the first time, the greatest number of church trustees and officers came from Lower Black Rock. The Dearborn Street Baptist Church is a good example. In 1875 only one of the five trustees, Henry M. Dayton, brother of Mayor Dayton, was from Black Rock. The other four came from the area south of the Creek in what had been Upper Black Rock.[19] By 1885 all five came from Black Rock.[20] The same was true of the Black Rock Methodist Church on Dearborn Street. Not only did this congregation change its name from the Riverside to the Black Rock Methodist Church, a sign of increased identification with the neighborhood, but now all of its officers came from Black Rock whereas but one had ten years earlier.[21] Of the twenty-seven officers and trustees of the six new churches in the area in 1887, twenty-four came from Black Rock while only three came from areas south of the Scajaquada Creek. In 1875 on the other hand, only four of the eighteen officers of the four existing churches came from the neighborhood.[22] Thus, not only were the people of Black Rock building new churches, but

their insistence that existing churches be run by neighborhood people suggests a newly found desire to have local institutions administered by and for the people of the neighborhood.

// Neighborhood social life also underwent important transformations between 1875 and 1885. During the first twenty years after annexation, there was but one fraternal organization in the neighborhood: the Parrish Lodge of the Free Masons, which met in 1875 as it had twenty years earlier in Dr. Dayton's home on Dearborn.[23] The list of similar organizations in 1885 reveals that social life oriented around the neighborhood had grown considerably more organized. There were now the Landmark Lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen, the Free Mason's Occidental Lodge, the Frontier Lodge of the Empire Order of Mutual Aid, the Royal Templars of Temperance, the Black Rock Lodge of Harugari, the Knights of Pithias, two branches of the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association, and the North Buffalo Catholic Institute, a library and social club.[24] //

The growing social complexity increased the use of taverns and halls as important neighborhood meeting places. In 1886 the North Buffalo Hotel at Hamilton and Niagara opened and quickly became the headquarters of several of the above associations.[25] Others met at Heitzman's and Philippbars taverns within a block of each other on Amherst.

// The increasing localism of neighborhood religious and social life was accompanied by a change in the political life of the neighborhood, the main effect of which was the creation of a new and different breed of leaders. The men who had served as Black Rock's elected leaders in the years immediately following annexation differed greatly from the men who emerged during the Gilded Age. For example, throughout

the 1850's and 1860's Samuel W. Howell, the mill owner mentioned earlier, served regularly as one of the twelfth ward's two aldermen.[26] In addition to his extensive commercial activities in Black Rock, Howell had served as a director of the Buffalo Board of Trade between 1848 and 1861.[27] That he had been involved in the commercial life of downtown Buffalo even before the annexation of Black Rock in 1855 is an indication of the extensiveness of his contacts well beyond the boundaries of the neighborhood. Similar in outlook was Henry Swartz who in spite of his German-sounding name was an American born lawyer from Dearborn Street and a perennial alderman from Black Rock's ward during the early post-annexation period.[28] Like Howell, Swartz also had had a good deal of exposure to the business and political community of downtown Buffalo, a characteristic that distinguished him from the great majority of Black Rock's population. Indeed, he was one of the only eight people from the neighborhood who in 1865 commuted to work in downtown Buffalo.[29]

What most distinguishes these men from the aldermen of the last quarter of the century was that the former showed no particular identification with their neighborhood. While they all sponsored legislation calling for local improvements such as: the cleaning of streets, the laying of crosswalks, and the construction of sewers, their efforts on behalf of their neighborhood never went beyond these legislative endeavors. This indifferent attitude toward the neighborhood was epitomized by Louis P. Dayton. Dayton was a physician who, like the attorney Swartz. lived in Black Rock but practiced in downtown Buffalo. After two terms as alderman from the twelfth ward, Dayton was elected Mayor of Buffalo in 1875.[30] Although he served for two years, a perusal of the Buffalo newspapers during his tenure reveals no more

references to his home neighborhood than there had been in the years before his election. Indeed, his mayoralty had no apparent impact whatsoever on the neighborhood of Black Rock. By the early 1880's, however, the growth of neighborhood consciousness in Black Rock had produced a totally different understanding of neighborhood leadership than that practiced by Howell, Swartz, and Dayton.

In 1875, the year that Dr. Dayton was elected Mayor of Buffalo, a new breed of leader, characterized by his German birth or his German-born parents and by his ownership of a local store, began to appear in the neighborhood. In that year, William Farmer, a German-born teamster from Niagara Street, was elected as one of the ward's aldermen while John Hertel, a Niagara Street tavern-keeper, also born in Germany, was elected as one of the ward's two supervisors.[31] Five years later two more German-born merchants - John Esser, a coal dealer, and John Hanbach, proprietor of a furniture store, both on Amherst Street - were elected aldermen, marking the first time that Black Rock sent both members of the ward's aldermanic delegation to the Common Council.[32] That this group of men had solidified their political control over the neighborhood became even more apparent when in 1885, one year prior to the formation of the Businessmen's Association, two more Black Rock men were again elected as aldermen while still another was elected supervisor.[33]

Coincidental with the rise of this new leadership class was the departure from the neighborhood of the men who had been prominent during the twenty years following annexation. By 1885 there was no trace of Howell, Safford, Swartz, or Dayton in the neighborhood. The City Directory of 1855 lists three Dayton Brothers living in Black Rock: Louis and Charles, both doctors, and Henry, a grocer. All three of them

continued to live here until 1875 when Louis was elected Mayor of Buffalo. His downtown experience was apparently pivotal for the whole family for by 1885 all of the Dayton brothers had moved out of Black Rock and were living in disparate parts of the city.[34]

Samuel Howell lived in his large brick home on the south-east corner of Amherst and Dearborn until his death in 1871.[35] Following his death his children continued to live there until 1886 when they sold their home to the newly organized North Buffalo Catholic Institute and they moved to Bryant Street.[36]

Henry Swartz and Elisha Safford joined this exodus. Swartz had had his legal practice downtown for many years and in 1883 he moved his residance to lower Niagara Street, two years after Safford had moved to Summer Street.[37]

Although it is difficult to determine the extent to which these older leaders felt threatened by the rise of this new burgher class, their departure from the neighborhood, whether or not a conscious reaction of the new German-born generation of leaders, or simply a reflection of their earlier evidenced cosmopolitanism, merely made the latter's inevitable dominance of Black Rock. Their position was further enhanced when in April, 1886 twenty-two of Black Rock's new bourgeoisie formed the Black Rock Businessmen's Association.

The minutes of the Association, available for most of the period under study, reveal a great deal about the backgrounds and beliefs of the founders, the burghers of Black Rock who, in assuming the right to speak for the neighborhood, represented no one but themselves and responded only to what they perceived to be the needs of the neighborhood. The original twenty-two men who gathered at Heitzman's Tavern had much in common.[38] All but three were born in the United States.

However, unlike the earlier American-born neighborhood leaders, these men, without exception, all had German parents, all of whom had been recently arrived laborers and small merchants when Black Rock was annexed in 1854. Similarly, all of the Association's founders were under forty years old and all of them had gone into their own business during the preceeding decade.[39] Philip Gerst provides an illustrative example. In 1886, Philip's father Jacob was seventy-eight years old. Born in Germany, he had come to Black Rock in 1851 and ever since annexation he had kept a grocery store on Niagara Street.[40] In 1886, his American-born son Philip was twenty-eight years old and the owner of a real estate agency on Amherst Street.[41] This intergenerational difference was true of several other of the Association's founders: John Druar, the American-born son of a German grocer, was in 1886 a twenty-four year old lawyer.[42] Because of his legal training and his resultant contacts in the city beyond Black Rock, Druar was to become the neighborhood legal advisor; in addition to his work for the Association, he was to serve as counselor for the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association following its founding in 1895.[43] Louis Roesch was another whose occupation took him well beyond the parochial experiences of his father, a German-born butcher.[44] In 1886, at the age of twenty-seven, Roesch, like Gerst, owned a real estate office.[45] Apparently real estate was an accessible field for upward occupational mobility. Charles Guenther and George Denner were two other founders whose parents were German-born and who by 1886 owned their own real estate and insurance agencies.[46]

There were other avenues of improvement open to these ambitious young men. Joseph Hoffmeyer, the son of a German butcher, was in 1886 a twenty-five year old building contractor, a clear indication

of his greater ambition and opportunity, if not greater wealth.[47] That it was the more mobile residents of Black Rock who were behind the formation of the Association is suggested by the case of the Moser family. In 1875, twenty-six years after his arrival in Black Rock, Charles Moser, Sr. was the owner of an Amherst Street saloon. By 1886 his three sons were on their own: two were laborers, while Charles, Jr., at twenty-six, the youngest in the family, had taken over as owner of the family saloon.[48] It was this young man, not his two laboring brothers, who was among the first businessmen of Black Rock to feel the need for neighborhood organization.

It was logical that the "First President" of the Association reflected the background of the founders. If John Esser was different from the majority of the founders it was because he had been more successful economically. Esser was born in Black Rock in 1848, one year following his father's arrival here.[49] Starting life as a laborer, he had worked his way up the small hierarchy of Samuel Howell's Globe Flour Mill so that by 1875 he had become a "Manager" there.[50] Three years later he left Howell to open a coal and wood business of his own several blocks away from his home at the corner of Amherst and Thompson.[51] In 1884, he added to his business interests when he opened the Banner Flour Mill on the Canal towpath near Austin Street.[52]

The only other officer who shared the German-American nationality of the majority of the founders was Michael Kramer. Born in Black Rock in 1850, Kramer, like Esser, worked for several years in the Globe Mill.[53] Yet, by 1881 he had collected the necessary capital so that at the age of thirty-one he was the owner of a cigar factory and retail outlet at 1865 Niagara.[54]

It is interesting to speculate as to why these eleven men,

eight of whom were first generation German-Americans, chose four officers of different ethnic origin. Both the "First" and the "Second Vice-Presidents" of the Association were non-German native Americans. In other respects, however, they were similar to the predominant German-American group. Michael Nealy, whose name suggests possible Irish descent, was born in Vermont and came to Black Rock with his family in 1863 at the age of ten.[55] By the time he was twenty-two, Nealy was the owner of a grocery and liquor store and by the time of his election to the Association,he was a deputy collector of customs at the International Bridge, a political position which may well have appealed to the members of the Association.[56]

The other non-German native American was William E. Plummer, the Association's "Second Vice-President." Born in Massachusetts in 1846, Plummer came to Black Rock with his parents in 1850.[57] As a teenager he had worked odd jobs,one of which was with Safford's Stave Factory.[58] He was quite successful here as by 1875 he had joined the ranks of management as the company's secretary.[59] His experience was valuable and in 1883 he,along with three partners, opened the International Box and Heading Factory at the foot of Hertel Avenue.[60] He was president of this company at the time of his selection as the Association's Vice-President.

Given the activities of the Association during the last fourteen years of the century, it is not surprising that the German-American businessmen who dominated the neighborhood and who formed the Association selected these non-Germans as officers. As an analysis of their activities and concerns will show, it is clear that these men were defensive concerning their backgrounds and lacked the self-confidence which they thought was the possession of people with several generations of

American citizenship. For they, as first generation Americans in a recently metropolitanized section of Buffalo, wanted the respectability that they felt native Americans like Plummer and Nealy brought to the Association. Furthermore, they must have realized that if their organization was to claim the support of the several ethnic groups in the neighborhood, they could not afford to be ethnically restrictive. It was with this in mind that Richard Humphrey was elected as the Association's Treasurer. Of the men chosen to serve on the Association's first board of directors, Humphrey was one of the two who were not born in the United States. Born in Wales in 1850, Humphrey came to Black Rock in 1869.[61] First he worked as a teamster and then in 1877 he opened a coal and feel store on the corner of Amherst and Niagara which he owned at the time of his election to the Association.[62]

The other foreign born officer and in many ways the most interesting of them all, was Alfred E. Tovey, the Association's Corresponding Secretary. Although a Canadian and a resident of Black Rock for merely two years, the editor of the International Gazette, itself only one month old, epitomized the spirit of the founders of the Association. For like the rest of the members, Tovey at twenty-seven, was ambitious, a man-on-the-make, with aspirations for himself and for his adopted neighborhood not unlike those which have characterized urban boosters throughout the history of American cities.

With the exception of Tovey and Humphrey, every one of the founders of the Black Rock Businessmen's Association had witnessed the changes which Black Rock had undergone in the thirty-one years since annexation. Not only had the population increased from approximately 1400 in 1855 to 6800 in 1892 (a six-fold increase as opposed to a slightly more than three-and-a-half-fold increase for the city-at-large -

see Chart I on p. 19), but the neighborhood, and more importantly its relationship with the rest of the city, had changed so that Black Rock was no longer the isolated subsection of the city that it had been as recently as 1865. For the spread of the railroads and the concommitant growth of industry had extended the power of the downtown city well beyond the traditional boundaries of the walking city and had brought Black Rock within the confines of the urban-industrial complex of Buffalo. Simultaneously, Black Rock's historical heritage first as an independent town, then later as a long isolated subsection of the city, plus the growing vitality of its small-store economy and local institutional life, had strengthened identification with the neighborhood unit. The power of these contradictory forces of late nineteenth century urban life - an agressive metropolitanism, on the one hand and a compelling local orientation on the other - produced serious tensions within the neighborhood which were reflected in the Businessmen's Association. Thus, the new leaders of Black Rock were like their optimistic compatriots in cities throughout nineteenth century America, infected with the fever of metropolitan growth, the heady desire to emulate the success and progress of downtown Buffalo. One of Tovey's first editorials following the fire of 1886 clearly articulates this sentiment:

> How to Build up Black Rock: Talk about it. Write about it. Help to improve it. Beautify the streets. Patronize the merchants, advertise in its newspaper, electe good men to all offices, pay your taxes without grumbling, never let an opportunity to say a good thing about it pass, remember that every dollar you invest in a permanent improvement is that much more money to your interest.[63]

Yet coexisting with this boosterish attitude was a deep commitment to the neighborhood community as evidenced by the Black Rock Businessmen's

Association who at their first meeting in April, 1886 established stringent localistic requirements for both the boundaries of the Association and membership in it. By limiting the area of their concerns to the historical boundaries of the neighborhood - Scajaquada Creek on the south, the Niagara River on the west, Hertel Avenue on the north and the Amherst-Tonawanda railroad crossing on the east - they made a decision which had far more than local geographical significance.[64] For by assuming these boundaries, these men were identifying with an area whose historical identity as a separate entity had been established since 1797 when the Seneca Nation ceded this identical square mile of territory to Jaspar Parrish. This link to Black Rock's independent and isolated past was further cemented by the rigid and strictly adhered to rules regarding membership in the Association. For according to the by-laws of the Association, membership was open only to those people who both lived and worked in Black Rock.[65]

Although as yet unaware of the tension between these ideas of neighborhood, the men who had formed the Black Rock Businessmen's Association and the editor of the International Gazette were convinced by 1886 of the necessity to define the neighborhood and its relationship with the rest of the city.

CHAPTER III

THE BLACK ROCK BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION SEEKS TO REDEFINE THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND ALTER ITS RELATIONSHIP TO DOWNTOWN BUFFALO

What were the choices available to the neighborhood in 1886? How long would Black Rock be able to preserve the independent character and structure that had prevailed here for so long? After all, had not this very independence and isolation resulted in the insufficient services responsible for the damage caused by the fire of 1886? If so, would it not be best for Black Rock if it were to become more integrally related to the rest of the city. These were but a few of the questions - so difficult because they went to the heart of these men's perceptions of their neighborhood and the city-at-large - that faced the founders of the Black Rock Businessmen's Association as they met to determine the future direction of Black Rock.

While they were deeply rooted in the neighborhood and identified strongly with it, the founders of the Association were troubled by the fact that their neighborhood's isolation and self-sufficiency had kept it beyond the mainstream of urban progress and improvement. This is not only denied Black Rock its rightful due but also offended the aspirations of Black Rock's ambitious Businessmen by perpetuating the reputation of the neighborhood as a backward and unimportant subsection of the city. It was the desire to overcome this characterization of the neighborhood as much as to win actual improvements that

led the Association to seek answers and a course of action. As long as the answers called for no major alteration of the traditional structure of the neighborhood there was harmony and consensus in Black Rock. But once they required a new and altered definition of the neighborhood there was dissension and crisis. These efforts to redefine the neighborhood and alter its relationship with downtown Buffalo is the subject of the following pages.

In 1886, the year the Association formed and the International Gazette appeared, there were 141 miles of streets in Buffalo, forty-five of them lit with electric lamps, the rest with gas.[1] Throughout the late 1880's and early 1890's gas lamps were rapidly being replaced by electricity in every section of the city. Eager to see the extension of electric lights throughout the city, the Common Council passed a resolution in November, 1887, declaring that it was the intention of the city of Buffalo to light all of its public streets with electricity. That same week Alderman Louis Roesch,who as a Niagara Street butcher had been one of the founders of the Association, introduced a resolution calling for electric lamps on Tonawanda, Hertel, and Dearborn Streets. However, Mayor Joseph Becker vetoed both these bills and by so doing let it be known that the businessmen of Black Rock could not take for granted improvements which they deemed necessary to their neighborhood. If these men ever questioned the need for organized neighborhood leadership, their doubts were dispelled by the language of Becker's veto message: "I object as always to the extension of electricity at the present rates to outlying residential districts of the city."[2] Becker's veto angered Alfred Tovey as much for his characterization of the neighborhood as for the veto itself and aroused the Association to action. Tovey responded sharply to the Mayor, chiding him with sacri-

ficing progress for economy: "This is a progressive age, Mr. Mayor, and it is hardly likely that we shall go back to the dark ages simply because it costs more to light our streets than it would to keep them in darkness."[3] In a letter to the same edition of the paper, John Esser, the president of the Association wrote under the heading "He Don't Want Black Rock to Boom" criticising the Mayor for his "unrealistic, unfair attitude toward the booming section of Black Rock." Seizing the opportunity to announce Black Rock's coming of age and to assert an image of Black Rock different than the Mayor's, Esser added that no longer "can Black Rock be considered an outlying area of Buffalo. Our importance to the life of the city had been well demonstrated by the increased movement of manufactories here. The population is growing steadily, the commercial heart of Black Rock beats stronger every day. We must have and will have modern lighting. Mayor Becker will not stand in the path of Black Rock's future."[4] In this same letter Esser announced that the Association had formed a Lighting Committee under Frank Philippbar, the Niagara Street tavern keeper, "in order to insure that justice is done in Black Rock in this matter of electric lights."

Tovey's and Esser's rhetoric is important in understanding their perception of the problem facing Black Rock, for rather than admit that their neighborhood was considered as an outlying and less important section of the city, they created the impression that Becker vetoed Roesch's resolution because he was anti-Black Rock. The fact of the matter is that Mayor Becker displayed no particular antagonism toward Black Rock but rather assigned a low priority to the improvement of all areas beyond the downtown pale. Indeed, throughout the winter and spring of 1888 he vetoed similar resolutions for electricity in the less heavily

settled areas on Delavan Avenue between Delaware Avenue and Main Street and in the process incurred the anger of representatives of this area as well.[5]

However, by late 1888 the Council had begun to override some of the Mayor's vetoes and this electric lamps were placed at the corner of Niagara and Tonawanda, Niagara and Amherst, Dearborn and Amherst, and East and Amherst, all in the heart of Black Rock.[6] So pleased was the Association with this progress that in November, 1888 they resolved to write a letter to the ward's aldermen applauding their efforts on behalf of Black Rock.[7] Soon after the Gazette editorialized that "the first steps have finally been taken to bring Black Rock into the Age of Light. It will be a mere matter of time before our whole area glows in the light of the Goddess Electricity."[8] Yet in spite of the vociferous support among these neighborhood spokesmen, it is important to note that there were some people in Black Rock who did not welcome the increased costs that came with electricity. One letter to the Gazette in the spring of 1888 stressed the high cost of electricity and added that "the working people of Black Rock are content with gas lighting." Hinting at the discontent with the merchant leadership which would soon become more outspoken, this "Irate Taxpayer", went on to say that "if the merchants of Black Rock require electric lighting to improve their business, let them pay for it."[9] Yet for now at least, the evidence clearly indicates that the great majority of people in Black Rock supported the Association in its efforts to secure basic improvements for the area.

Behind this struggle were two conflicting images of the modern city. On the one hand there was Mayor Becker's downtown orientation and his understanding that the city was divided into a vital business and

residential section downtown and peripheral and subordinate outlying fringe areas. On the other hand was the view then emanating from the neighborhood that the city was one metropolitan area comprised of distinct, yet equally important parts. This conflict was renewed in August, 1888 when the Common Council passed a bill calling for the construction of a trunk sewer on Hertel Avenue to be financed through the sale of city bonds. Once again the Association and the Gazette protested what they interpreted as a slight to their section of the city. Tovey proclaimed that the "Sewer bill is a vital first step in the development of the whole northwest section of Buffalo." And, as he had done before, he charged that the Mayor was cheating Black Rock and that his only motive was his fear that the growth of Black Rock would threaten other areas of the city, "particularly Mayor Becker's East Side."[10] Equally incensed by Becker's veto, the Association, recessed for the summer, called a special session to deal with the matter.

Yet now as during the electric light controversy two years earlier, Black Rock spokesmen were not alone in their opposition to the Mayor as they were joined by others, particularly downtown interests, eager for the development of the whole metropolitan area. Several days after the Mayor's veto State Senator Robert McMillan from Buffalo had introduced an identical bill into the State Legislature which had received the support of the leading downtown newspapers, business and civic groups.[11] Indeed, before the Association gathered on August 13, the Chamber of Commerce had decided to send a delegation to Albany urging the support of the bill,[12] and when the Chamber invited other businessmen's groups throughout the city to join them, the Association was only too happy to accept their invitation to send to delegates with them.[13] For not only did the support of downtown interests increase the chances

of the bill's passage but it conferred a degree of acceptance and respectability which until then they had not enjoyed. Two weeks later the bill was passed and signed into law by the Governor.[14] Following its enactment the Courier reported that the new sewer would drain over 5,000 acres of land in the vicinity of Hertel Avenue: "This section is the most favorably situated for the transforming effects which will make it the garden spot of Buffalo."[15] Pleased with its passage and thankful for their participation in the successful lobbying efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, Tovey also voiced high hopes for the sewer: "With perfect drainage such as ought to be secured by the building of the sewer this vast and beautiful land in North Buffalo will be quickly taken up and soon dotted with homes not only of working men but of clerks, young professional men and others who can ill afford to purchase a building spot at the prices demanded in the more centrally located areas of the city. We firmly believe that ten years from now will see this locality as transformed into one of the most attractive spots in the city."[16] The growth of Riverside in the years ahead bore out these sanguine predictions.

Heartened by the support of the downtown political and business groups, the Association and the Gazette pressed on with their cause of Black Rock's modernization. While Black Rock was no more vulnerable to fires than any other section of the city, the fire of 1886 served as a clear reminder that Black Rock's many years of separate development had resulted in an absence of improvements essential to life in the modern city. Tovey had wasted no time in decrying the conditions which had made control of the fire difficult: because it served streetcars as well as team and pedestrian traffic, the bridge over the Scajacquada Creek was perennially jammed, and the muddy streets which hindered the flow of traffic into and through the neighborhood: "Mud and slush and more mud

and slush. Black Rock is now in a state of semi-fluidity. Teaming is almost at a stand-still; residents are clamoring for the necessities of life. The streets are in such condition that it is impossible to get an empty wagon through let alone a loaded one."[17]

Because it served as both the neighborhood's main commercial street and Black Rock's only arterial connection with the rest of the city, the Businessmen's Association reserved its criticisms for Niagara Street. In a letter to the Gazette, John Esser, the president of the Association, wrote that a well-paved Niagara Street was vital if "Black Rock is ever to take its place alongside the other important sections of the city." Angered by what he charged was downtown's neglect of Black Rock, Esser appealed to the neighborhood's common memory of an independent past: "Why was Black Rock ever annexed to the city if her interests were not to be looked after. Better a thousand times it had remained a town by itself and have been able to appoint men to look after its welfare than to be compelled to pay out money year after year and get so little in return."[18]

Yet for now, at least, this nostalgic reference to Black Rock's separate history was more rhetorical than it was an actual reflection of the Association's attitude toward the city for as their efforts to have a new bridge built over the Scajaquada Creek clearly demonstrates, the Association was committed to doing whatever possible to overcome downtown's traditional neglect of Black Rock even if that meant the loss of the neighborhood's legacy of independence.

The Scajaquada Creek had always been a problemmatic aspect of the neighborhood's identity for like a medieval moat the Creek symbolized both independence and isolation. The fire of 1886 had shown the neighborhood how dangerous these characteristics could be and within two weeks

of their formation the Association acted unanimously in instructing Alderman Charles Rano, a Niagara Street druggist and member of the Association, to introduce legislation calling for the construction of a new bridge between Dearborn Street on the Black Rock side of the Creek and West Street on the opposite bank. The Council, as eager to bring outlying areas within the metropolitan pale as they had been in the matter of electric lights, readily complied and by the end of 1886 Rano's bill became law.[19]

Before a new bridge could be built, however, Dearborn Street would have to be paved with asphalt. According to the plan for the new bridge worked out by the City Assessor, half of the expense for both the paving and the bridge was to be borne by the property owners on Dearborn, and the rest from property owners north of the Creek between Niagara Street and Military Road and the property owners of West Street.[20] Immediately, the people of Dearborn Street protested and in a letter to the Gazette "A Resident of Dearborn Street" objected saying that "it is simply not fair that this improvement of obvious benefit to everybody in the area should be borne so heavily by the residents of one street."[21] Afraid that his parochial opposition might prevent the construction of the bridge, the Association intervened in the controversy. In a letter to the Gazette, John Esser, though "not a resident of Dearborn Street", sympathized with the criticisms of the Assessor's plan. However, Esser insisted that the objections of the property owners on a particular street "must not stand in the way of an improvement which is vital to the security of Black Rock, commercial and otherwise." Stressing the importance of this issue to the vitality of the whole community, Esser announced that the Association was sponsoring an open meeting and urged all "Black Rockites to attend so that the problem of the Bridge and the

paving of Dearborn Street may be resolved for the benefit of all concerned."[22]

In the five days prior to the announced meeting, Esser was busily at work drawing up a new plan and negotiating with appropriate city officials. Realizing that if the bridge were ever to win the approval of the property owners of Dearborn Street, whose consent was necessary if the plan was to pass, Esser worked out an alternative assessment scheme which he made public at the Association's open meeting. In a move calculated to diffuse the opposition to the planned improvement "The Black Rock Businessmen's Association Plan for the Funding of the Dearborn Street Bridge and Paving" proposed that the bridge and the paving should be paid equally by all property owners in the eleventh and twelfth wards, the two wards adjacent to the Creek.[23] Esser's strategy was successful. The assemblage of over seventy-five people, including all of the property owners from Dearborn Street, approved the plan and the Association appointed a committee under President Esser to work out the compromise with the City Assessor.[24]

More than any other issue yet faced by the new leaders of Black Rock, the Dearborn Street bridge epitomized the contradictory pressures at work within the neighborhood. On one hand Tovey, Esser, and the other members of the Association coveted the bridge for the tangible as well as the imagistic impact it would have on both improving the neighborhood's access to and status within the metropolis. For if anything demonstrated Black Rock's unwillingness to accept the prevailing downtown oriented attitude toward the city of political leaders like Mayor Becker who, according to Tovey, "would erect a Chinese wall around Main Street, Delaware Avenue and North Street beyond which no public expenditures would be made", it was a bridge.[25] Yet in spite of their

eagerness to overcome their neighborhood's reputation as a so-called "outlying area" it was clear that Black Rock's spokesmen were not prepared to abandon their long-held understanding of the neighborhood as a separate and special section of the city.

It is important to note that the completion of the bridge in 1889 did not produce a battery of toasts and editorials heralding a new age of metropolitan participation and integration, but rather self-congratulatory rhetoric that usually follows a well-fought battle. Tovey typified this attitude: "The people of Black Rock have won an important struggle. The new bridge and the paving of Dearborn Street are feathers in the cap of Black Rock. Wear them proudly."[26] A year later when the bridge was finally completed, Tovey sounded more like an editor in one of Gilpin's western towns than the publisher of a neighborhood newspaper: "Whoop 'er up boys! We're doing it. In a short time we will have electric lights, electric railroads, a new bridge over the Creek, any amount of new factories and thousands of new residents."[27] Tovey never tired of applauding the achievements of his neighborhood. Simultaneously with a "Four Year Retrospective Banquet" sponsored by the Businessmen's Association in 1890, Tovey featured a column of the same name in the Gazette. Herein the neighborhood's accomplishments were written large enough for everybody in Black Rock to read. In a paragraph filled with heady references to "then" and "now", Tovey recited a litany of progress: three water mains in 1886 whereas "now almost every street that is in any way built up has water pipes." then the only paved streets were Niagara, parts of Military Road, Amherst, and Tonawanda. Now eleven streets were paved with asphalt. The horse cars ran to Amherst Street every fifteen minutes. Now there were electric cars on Niagara every five minutes, while the trip to downtown Buffalo took thirty instead of

fifty minutes. Following a list of new factories, stores, and churches which have sprung up in Black Rock since our founding in 1886, Tovey proudly concluded that "The average Black Rockite feels his oats and now can carry his head just as high as the full-fledged bison."[28]

While Tovey tended to think of Black Rock as a separate and even rivalrous town, very much like the views of the boosters of the Village of Black Rock during the early 1820's, even John Esser, a far more metropolitan-minded man than the editor of the Gazette, had based his appeals for the construction of the bridge on an understanding of Black Rock as a special community somehow apart from the metropolitan mosaic. Esser's intervention in the dispute and the method in which he organized a mass meeting to discuss it, indicates a view of the neighborhood as a cohesive unit, small enough and sufficiently like-minded to function through a meeting-house style of politics.

While in many ways the desire to have a new bridge was motivated by Black Rock's strong localistic and boosterish orientation, it is important to note that it was also symbolic of the Association's increasingly obvious downtown orientation. But because the bridge itself did not require a major alteration of the traditional arrangements of the neighborhood, the conflict inherent in these different motives was, for now at least, muted. Yet once it became apparent that the plans of the Association would mean considerable changes in the structure of the neighborhood, the consensus of opinion that had prevailed in Black Rock since 1886 came to an end. It began to crack during the neighborhood debate over the electric streetcar.

The first electric streetcar in Black Rock ran in July, 1889, six months after the Common Council had granted a franchise to the Buffalo Street Railway Company.[29] Employing the same boosterish rhetoric

with which he greeted the Dearborn Street bridge, Tovey welcomed the line and predicted a great future for the neighborhood as a result: "Black Rock with electric cars, electric lights and other attributes of a booming metropolitan section will double and treble and double itself again in a very few years."[30] The Association agreed with Tovey and immediately went on record as being in favor of additional rapid transit lines in the neighborhood.[31] Their enthusiasm was understandable for electric transit seemed to offer a solution to all that had troubled these ambitious spokesmen of the neighborhood. For in addition to the actual growth possibilities presented by this improvement which, as Tovey noted, were considerable, rapid transit was the most effective means of overcoming the isolation that had long troubled the leaders of the neighborhood.

Of all the centralizing devices of nineteenth century urban technology, none was more effective in shattering the separatism of the walking city than the electric streetcar. The Association realized this immediately and sought to use the rapid transit system as a means to shatter forever not only Black Rock's actual isolation but its image as an area outside of the mainstream of the metropolis. In a letter to the Gazette the chairman of the newly formed Businessmen's Committee for Street Cars revealed the Association's sophisticated understanding of the promise of the streetcar to outlying neighborhoods: "The people of Black Rock in the northwest section of Buffalo are entitled to quick transit and rapid service equally with the people of downtown and of the East Side. It should be possible for the people of our section of the City to cross over to the East Side. The same must be true of the northern and southern reaches of our city. There must be no sectionalism in our city. We must use the rapid transit line to knit the

various vicinities of the city closer together rather than keep them distinctly apart."[32] Thus, using rhetoric that combined both metropolitan ideology with its advocacy of city-wide integration and unity and the proud local booster tradition, the Association plunged into the developing neighborhood controversy over the streetcar.

As the Association might well have anticipated from its experience during the Dearborn Street bridge episode, there were a good many people in the neighborhood who were satisfied with the existing structure of neighborhood life and who were unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary in order to bring additional streetcars to Black Rock. Indeed, only three months after his enthusiastic reception of the Niagara Street trolley, Tovey began to question the value of the improvement on both aesthetic and practical grounds: "There is nothing more dangerous and ugly than the trolley system. It makes every street look as unsightly as a backyard with a naked clothes line stretched across it. The disfiguring poles are on both sides of the street and when some other wire breaks and dangles on a trolley wire, there is apt to be a lively if not fatal electrical disturbance. The trolley is a danger, a disfigurement and a nuisance and Black Rock does not want another one."[33] To further publicize his disenchantment with the trolley, Tovey began a weekly column entitled "Trolley Tricks", a blow-by-blow account of the hazards of the Niagara Street trolley: run-over dogs, electrocuted horses and countless injuries to pedestrians. Although it was not yet apparent, Tovey's criticisms, like those of many people in Black Rock, had far more to do with the impact of the streetcar on the structure of the neighborhood than with complaints about its day-to-day operations. The proposed streetcar for Hertel Avenue brought the depth of the neighborhood's opposition to the surface.

In December, 1890 a petition representing the majority of the property owners on Hertel Avenue was filed with the Street Commissioner of Buffalo declaring their opposition to the Buffalo Street Railroad Company's plan to build a line on that avenue.[34] Two months later, however, the Common Council in an act of questionable legality, ignored the petition and granted the company the franchise. Protesting this action, Alderman Joseph Mang, an Amherst Street butcher and member of the Association, wrote to the Gazette on behalf of his Hertel Avenue constituents listing their complaints: "The street car company is already blocking every street in the city. Settlement on Hertel Avenue has not yet proceeded far enough east to warrant this new inconvenience. The work of the company is shoddy: the terrible accidents, the hazard to pedestrians and teams, the interruption of commerce. . . this is what we have come to expect from the Company and the residents of Hertel Avenue do not want it."[35]

With the streetcar now under the attack of both the Gazette and the ward's alderman, the Association responded to the growing threat to their metropolitan aspirations for the neighborhood. Frank Argus, the chairman of the Association's streetcar committee, took issue with Mang and in the pages of the Gazette insisted that "the benefits of the trolley will far outweigh the temporary dislocations." Relying on the traditional booster's language which had rallied generations of urbanites to action, Argus noted that "the coming of the rapid transit system to the Broadway area [on Buffalo's East Side] has more than tripled that sections's commercial activity, doubled the value of their real estate and done much to make it one of the most desirable sections of the city. All of this and more will be ours when the street-car comes to Hertel Avenue. Should not Black Rock be so blessed?"[36] Thus, motivated by their

boosterish aspirations for the commercial growth of their neighborhood, their on-going "me-too" rivalry with the rest of the city and their undaunted vision of Black Rock as well-integrated into the metropolitan area, the Association hoped to convince the rest of the community of the value of the electric trolley. Yet their arguments could not sway the residents of the Avenue who were sufficiently incensed that they mounted a street corner demonstration in an effort to block the work of the Company's construction gang. While his constituents protested in the streets, Alderman Mang took the matter directly to the Mayor who issued a cease and desist order.[37] Tovey's postscript to the affair made clear that the streetcar issue had driven a wedge between the leaders of the neighborhood: "In the interests of all concerned the Businessmen's Association would do well to pay closer attention to the needs of those whom they desire to represent."[38]

The desires of the Association to improve Black Rock's transit connections with the rest of the city were not chastened by the rebuffs of the neighborhood newspaper and many of its residents, and while they failed to win more streetcars they were not averse to using different techniques designed to enhance Black Rock's status within the metropolitan community. It was with this in mind that in March, 1894 they joined several other businessmen's associations throughout the city in their opposition to a bill pending in the State Legislature which would have restricted to six miles per hour the speed of streetcars operating within a city's limits. In a letter to the local assemblyman, John Esser wrote that "if this bill becomes law it will materially affect the speed of the electric cars running between Black Rock and Buffalo. Therefore we have resolved that we most emphatically protest against the passage of the bill as it will nullify the efforts of years of work to secure rapid

transit for this end of the city."[39] Although he ignored the self flattery of this letter whose tone suggested that Black Rock was a major center of rapid transit activity rather than a neighborhood with but one line, Alfred Tovey in his criticism of the Association's position, again seemed to speak for the majority of the neighborhood: "Whatever time is lost on a trip which in fact so few of us make will be more than made up in the safety of the people of Black Rock whose lives will only be further endangered should this bill not become law."[40] However, the downtown businessmen's lobby throughout the state was strong enough so that when the bill was passed in April, 1894, cities of 250,000 or more were exempted from its provisions.[41]

This issue, specifically, and the whole question of electric streetcars in general, is extremely important if we are to understand the different ideas prevalent in Black Rock about downtown Buffalo and the role of the neighborhood in the emerging metropolitan network. Buffalo, like other cities in late nineteenth century America, was changing rapidly as isolated enclaves of population were everywhere breaking down under the centralizing impact of urban technology, particularly rapid transit. For the electric car not only made possible the dispersal of the downtown population but it was also a battering ram which broke the barriers that had for so long separated outlying neighborhoods from the nexus of urban life downtown. For some people, then, the advent of the trolley presented an unprecedented opportunity, a chance for the distant and isolated neighborhoods to share with the downtown section of the city all the advantages of modern urban life. Afraid that the more parochial elements within the neighborhood would ruin an opportunity for which they had long waited, a chance to demonstrate that Black Rock was finally, in fact and in reputation, a modern

and progressive component of metropolitan Buffalo, the Association did all they could to generate enthusiasm for rapid transit.

If the streetcars forced a split in Black Rock between those people who still viewed the neighborhood as a self-sufficient, walking-city community - in Robert Wiebe's words an "island community: the relatively small, personal centers" which gave meaning to so many residents of the nineteenth century American city - and those eager to break down what they considered to be the walls of isolation and parochialism, the Charter of 1892 posed similar questions which again forced the people of Black Rock to make a choice as to the kind of neighborhood they wanted. For years the downtown advocates of an integrated metropolitan system had been toying with ways to centralize the city's political structure which, but for several minor changes, had been left intact since the Charter of 1855 initiated the highly decentralized system of ward representation. Most troublesome to the exponents of efficient and more responsive municipal government was the fact that there had been no reapportionment of the city's thirteen original wards in spite of the fact that Buffalo's population had grown from 50,000 to more than 225,000 people. The result was a cumbersome, fractionalized system of imbalanced wards with the most populous - the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eleventh in the German and Polish East Side section - having a total of eight aldermen in 1891, while the other nine wards with forty-five percent of the city's population had eighteen aldermen.[42] Obviously this situation worked to the advantages of the less populous wards like Black Rock's twelfth, and more specifically to Black Rock itself, since the greatest proportion of the people in the ward lived here. Indeed, there had not been one year since 1880 when both of the aldermen from the twelfth ward did not come from Black Rock.[43] Therefore,

Black Rock was inordinately well represented in the Common Council and despite the Association's charges of unfair treatment, it was clear by the early 1890's that the neighborhood had benefited greatly from the existing means of conducting the city's business. In 1892 Black Rock was as well equipped with sewers and paved streets as the rest of the city. Major streets like Niagara had been electrified and the electric streetcar had been introduced on this street less than two years after Frank Sprague had first developed electric rapid transit in Richmond, Virginia.[44] While Black Rock's proximity to Niagara Falls clearly had something to do with these latter improvements, the existence of a persistent neighborhood lobby in the form of two aldermen did not hurt either. Similarly, the institution of ward based representation was amenable to the pretensions of the ambitious men who made up the Association. Since the aldermen invariably came out of the ranks of the Association, the ward system gave these men greater access to the business-political center downtown while at the same time strengthening their authority in the neighborhood. This arrangement was threatened in 1891 when the New York State Legislature voted to give Buffalo a new charter.

The main purpose of the charter was to effect a reapportionment of the existing wards and to initiate at-large representation. The thirteen wards were divided into twenty-five with approximately 10,000 people in each. In order to accomplish this massive reapportionment, the fifth ward was divided into five new wards, the sixth into three, the seventh, tenth, and eleventh into four each. Of the original thirteen wards, only the fourth, the eighth, thirteenth, and Black Rock's twelfth were left intact.[45] In addition to ward reapportionment, the Charter called for a radical reconstitution of the City Council from a

unicameral Board of Aldermen into a bicameral legislature: a Board of Aldermen with one representative from each ward and a nine member Common Council elected by the city-at-large. By, thus, breaking-up the wards and dividing power between ward elected representatives with two year terms and at-large elected councilmen with three year terms, Albany prescribed a major political revolution for Buffalo.[46]

Because it involved a redefinition of the neighborhood community, the passage of the Charter in late January, 1891 produced dissension in Black Rock not unlike that which surrounded the controversy over the streetcars. Although there was never an official debate of it within the Association, it is clear that the majority of its members were clearly in favor of the Charter even though it denied them much of the traditional power which the unicameral ward system had provided. Yet the loss of one alderman was apparently a small trade-off, for what they lost in power they hoped to gain in prestige. Once again, when offered the opportunity to join the progressive mainstream of downtown opinion - the Chamber of Commerce, the Courier, and the Buffalo Evening News had long been in favor of the reforms embodied in the Charter - they grabbed it hoping that this, like the improved transit connection with downtown for which they had fought, would help to overcome what they perceived to be Black Rock's reputation as a vestigal remnant of the early nineteenth century and enhance its reputation as a progressive, business-minded section of the modern metropolis. Also, it is important to note that the Association could support the Charter with relatively little damage to the neighborhood's political power; for other than the loss of one alderman, Black Rock, unlike other areas of the city, was not reapportioned. There could have been no more flattering indication that their neighborhood image - making efforts

were paying off when in March, 1891 the Chamber of Commerce invited the Association to send a three-man delegation to join them on their trip to Albany to urge the Governor to sign the new Charter. And, without ever once discussing the merits of the Charter itself, the Association voted unanimously to accept the offer.[47] By the end of March, 1891 the Charter became law.

Because he regarded it as a threat to the political identity of the neighborhood, Alfred Tovey opposed the Charter as he had opposed the threat to the structure of the neighborhood implicit in the streetcars and from the moment in January, 1891 when the Charter was first submitted to the State Assembly, Tovey fought "this unjustified infringement on the home rule rights of both the city and Black Rock."[48] While critical of those sections of the Charter which gave the mayor greater appointive power, Tovey's most serious objection was reserved for the institution of an at-large elected city council: "Finally and most strenuously we oppose the Charter because of the provision for councilmen-at-large. This constitutes a direct attack on the principles of local government. It is a serious assault on the system of popular government and an injury to all representative institutions that begin with the wards of the cities."[49]

In order to understand Tovey's position here and his opposition to the electric streetcar, it is important that we appreciate him in his role in the neighborhood. There was something anachronistic about Tovey for in many ways he was more like a frontier-town promoter, mobile and ambitious in the tradition of Chicago's Ogden and Denver's Larrimer; a man who, once he adopted his new locale, identified with it fiercely and resisted all attempts to erase its uniqueness for which he felt more than partly responsible. More concretely, Tovey was the editor

and proprietor of a strictly local, neighborhood newspaper whose readership, if the absence of local advertisements in the downtown newspaper is an indication, relied almost totally on Tovey's Gazette for news of the rest of the city. This consideration, along with his awareness of the strength of Black Rock's local orientation, led him to question not only the Charter but, as we have seen, any developments which tended to weaken the cohesiveness of the neighborhood. While Tovey willingly supported the Dearborn Street bridge as beneficial to the health and welfare of the neighborhood, he had begun to have serious doubts about the other improvements advocated by the Association. As his opposition to the streetcar suggests, Tovey was evolving a new ideology of the neighborhood which was far more concerned with the actual needs of the residents of the neighborhood than with the neighborhood's image. His steadily growing awareness of the depth of Black Rock's localism now led him to reject the Charter of 1892 as a dangerous loss of neighborhood power and integrity at the hands of downtown.

As much as anything, it was the stigma of isolation, Black Rock's actual distance as well as its reputation as an area far removed from the center of the metropolis downtown, that had motivated the Association in the neighborhood struggles of the early 1890's. And in 1895, still not satisfied with Black Rock's access to downtown via the Niagara Street trolley and the Dearborn Street bridge, the Association advanced yet another scheme which they hoped would end forever the tendency to consider the neighborhood and "outlying area". Again the target of their attack was the Scajaquada Creek and in a letter to the Gazette, Richard Humphrey, the president of the Association, announced a proposal to connect the north and south banks of the Creek by building a thirty-five foot wide arterial bridge across it.[50] Humphrey enumerated

the advantages this additional bridge would bring to Black Rock: "By being free of street-cars it would enhance the flow of goods and people from Black Rock to the downtown sections of the city. It would relieve the pressure of traffic on Niagara Street south of Amherst. It would create a new area of development between Amherst Street and the Creek." Concluding his appeal with a refrain familiar to the plans of the Association, Humphrey wrote that "Last and most important of all, this new roadway is essential if Black Rock is ever to assume an important place in the life of the city of Buffalo."[51]

Tovey wasted little time in opposing the plan and in the next issue of the Gazette refuted all of the claims that Humphrey had made for it. Following the tack he had pursued in his opposition to additional streetcars in Black Rock, Tovey suggested that the need for greater access to downtown Buffalo was "questionable at best." He denied that traffic congestion on Niagara Street was a problem and ridiculed the prospect of further development on the northern banks of the Creek as "impossible considering that most of the land is already occupied by the /Pratt and Letchworth/ Company." finally, Tovey rejected the whole notion as "a needless waste of money at a time when the existing street system is clearly adequate."[52]

The realism of this proposal is questionable. The Association did not offer a scheme to fund the roadway and following Tovey's criticism of its relevance to the needs of the neighborhood, they apparently dropped the idea and nothing more was heard of it. However, the incident is important for it illustrates the extent to which the Association was willing to go in pursuit of their vision of the neighborhood.[53]

The nineteenth century symbols of growth and progress - smoke belching out of factory chimney, the black soot of the "iron horse" as

it chugged through a pastoral setting in a Currier and Ives print of a New England landscape, the glitter of a world's fair - had long been important props in the image making promotional efforts of urban boosters. As heirs of this venerable booster tradition the Businessmen's Association had become as adept as any of their forbears at advocating improvements which, if examined as closely as Tovey had begun to, had far more shine than substance. However, the Association was undaunted in its hopes of changing Black Rock's image, to make it commensurate with the late nineteenth century's ideal of progress and modernity. In the late nineteenth century city there was no more visible symbol of progress and prosperity than the railroad. And as eager as the Association had been to attract streetcars, they were as reluctant to do anything that might discourage the growth of railroads in Black Rock. It was understandable, therefore, that the Association in 1896 refused to endorse the efforts of Alderman Mang and Tovey to prevent the further use of Porter Square by the Grand Trunk Railroad.

In 1866 the Porter family had given a square block of land to the city to be held in perpetuity as a park. Known as Porter Square, the block was in the heart of Black Rock just south of the intersection of Niagara and Amherst Streets. Following the completion of the International Bridge the Grand Trunk, along with other railroads, had laid several tracks on the Square and by 1885 the construction here of a roundhouse, a freight station, and many railroad tracks, made the Square resemble more a railroad yard than a public park.[54] Incensed at the failure to carry out the will of the Porter family, Tovey demanded that the Square be restored so as to conform to its original purpose. He wrote that during the 1870's and early 1880's the neighborhood had been too passive to take on the Grand Trunk. Anyway, "the people of Black Rock

were expecting a boom as a result of the building of the railroads and therefore failed to place any restrictions on them."[55] Now, with the same gusto that had led him to challenge the right of the streetcar company to tear up the streets of Black Rock, he insisted that the Corporation Counsel investigate the right of the railroad to build on the Square: "They are squattors on the land and they must stop their violation of Porter Square if Black Rockites are to have full use of parkland that is rightfully theirs."[56] Tovey's request was reasonable: he was simply asking that no further building be allowed on the Square lest it become completely lost as a neighborhood recreation area. Armed with these arguments he sought to enlist the aid of the Businessmen's Association. However, they refused to take a position. Whether their support would have made a difference in the outcome is moot; however, their silence in a matter which pertained to the daily recreational needs of the people suggests the extent to which these men were unwilling to antagonize interests whose economic and symbolic value they deemed important to the life and the image of the neighborhood.[57]

After years of trying to present Black Rock as a modern and metropolitan section of Buffalo, it is not surprising that the Association was excited by the possibility that the Pan American Exposition, scheduled to be held in Buffalo in 1901, might be located at Riverside Park which overlooked the Niagara River a mile north of Amherst Street. And like business leaders in contemporary cities whose desperate need to preserve and enhance the reputation of decaying cities leads them to espouse such dubious panaceas as dome stadia and new university facilities, the Black Rock Businessmen's Association launched an ambitious promotional campaign to convince the Exposition directors of the desirability of Riverside Park over the other possible sites - Front and Delaware Parks. John Esser,

the first president and elder statesman of the Association, was made chairman of a specially constituted committee whose job it was to advertise and promote the Park.[58] Within three weeks Esser wrote a long letter to the Directors of the exposition in which he touted the advantages of his neighborhood park, citing particularly its size and "accessibility by boat, train and street-car to the rest of the city," words long familiar in the metropolitan vocabulary of the Association.[59] Even the Gazette was in favor of this proposition and in the same week that Esser wrote his letter, Tovey printed a map of the Park. Accompanying this was the text of a petition drawn up by Esser and circulated by the Association whose sentimental and exaggerated appeal is a masterpiece in the literature of boosterism:

> The Riverfront site is better adapted for the Exposition than any other site that has been offered for the following reasons: there is plenty of land that would cost practically nothing and it is high and dry so that drainage is excellent. There are fine groves on this land and the outlook over the Niagara River is extremely attractive. In our opinion the Exposition must be held on the Niagara River or it will be a failure. We should first seek to please outside visitors and it appears that it is the universal desire of people living away from here to have the Exposition on the Riverfront. There is but one Niagara River and we have but one opportunity and if located inland we shall be subject for the ridicule of every nation on earth for throwing away our grand chance and strangers would look upon it as a state fair only.[60]

The purpose of this mawkish petition is unclear. Did the Association plan to circulate it throughout the city? If so, did they envision a groundswell of support for their site? Or, if they planned to limit their campaign to Black Rock alone, were they sufficiently deluded by their rhetoric of the past decade so that they actually believed that the people of Black Rock (that is if the Association would have more luck than before in persuading them to go along

with their position) could influence the decision of the Exposition's directors? However, the purpose and impact of the petition became academic when several days later the Board announced the selection of the Delaware Park site. The Association's hopes ended pathetically as not one of the twenty-one Exposition directors cast a vote for Riverside Park.[61]

It is ironic that with all of their efforts to assert a metropolitan identity, an image of Black Rock befitting a modern metropolis, the Association, appropriately joined in this battle by Tovey, the local booster par excellence, approached the matter of the Expo not as an integral component of the metropolitan community ready to accept whatever the downtown community deemed beneficial to the city-at-large, but rather as a separate entity which, like its namesake of the 1820's, fought desperately for the much coverted prize of being selected as the western terminus of the Erie Canal. Because the World's Fair offered the Businessmen of Black Rock the opportunity to present the neighborhood in the progressive and metropolitan image they had long coveted, they waged their own private campaign to have their neighborhood chose and in the process revealed, in spite of their aspirations and pretension, the persistence of Black Rock's tradition of localism. Of the three possible sites, only Riverside was boosted by a community-wide effort. While the Front and Delaware Park had each been championed by individuals like Dexter Rumsy, there is no indication in the contemporary accounts that indicate anything like the coordinated community effort launched by the Black Rock Businessmen's Association and the International Gazette on behalf of Riverside Park. Thus, the effort to have Riverside Park selected as the site of the Pan American Exposition epitomized the conflicting attitudes the neighborhood leaders

had about their neighborhood: on the one hand it showed the attempt by the Association to manipulate the neighborhood's image so as to conform to downtown's image of progress and metropolitan modernity; while on the other it reemphasized the instinctive tendency of the Association, their rhetoric aside, to perceive Black Rock as a separate and indigenous neighborhood unit within the larger metropolitan complex. As long as the contradiction inherent in these attitudes was not resolved, there was dissension in the neighborhood.

The selection of Buffalo as the site of the Pan-American Exposition was an appropriate way for Buffalo to close the nineteenth century for the the Fair focused national attention on a city whose development since mid-century had been dramatic. Here, as in other industrial urban centers, no aspect of life was left unaffected by urbanization; and like the disruption that occurred in the institutions, economies, life styles and values of the city and its people, the separate neighborhoods of the city were irreparably altered by the course of nineteenth century urban growth. Every major event in Buffalo since the annexation of Black Rock in 1855 - the annexation itself, the creation of a municipal park system, the advent of electric streetcars, the growth of an increasingly centralized urban economy, the institution of at-large representation, to name but a few - all had resulted in an increase in the strength and dominance of downtown Buffalo at the expense of the separate and disparate neighborhood enclaves of the city. By the turn of the century, the days of the neighborhood were numbered as more and more of the decisions affecting the lives of residents in Black Rock, Cold Spring, the Polish East Side, and other ethnic and geogrphic enclaves within the city were made in the downtown offices of businessmen and politicians.

Accustomed as we have become in recent years to the particularistic cries of separate racial, ethnic, and economic groups seeking to remove their neighborhoods from the metropolitan mainstream, it is perhaps difficult to believe that in the late nineteenth century there were a group of men in Black Rock, and if that area is in any way typical, in other neighborhoods throughout the city, who desired a greater integration and participation within the processes of metropolitan life. Coming into their own during the 1870's and 1880's, these first generation Americans were impressed by the signs of growth visible throughout downtown Buffalo. Large office buildings like the Guaranty, the Ellicott Square building, the fortress-like Erie County Savings Bank; impressive hostelries - the Lafayette, Buffalo and Iroquois hotels - all symbolized the importance of Buffalo as a major urban center. Comparing what they saw here with what existed in Black Rock they found their neighborhood wanting. Yet, unlike the earlier generation of Black Rock leaders - Howell, Dayton, Swartz, and Safford - whose local orientation was minimal, the men of the Association had their roots firmly planted in the neighborhood and rather than abandon it they sought to remake it in the more appealing image of downtown. In order to accomplish this they had to first convince the rest of the city that Black Rock was not a backwater of the city but was rather as modern and progressive in attitudes and goals as was the downtown community. Thus, they fought the implications of Mayor Becker's veto of the Hertel Avenue Sewer Bill and of electric lighting, which if allowed to stand, would have further retarded the development of the neighborhood. Once these goals were achieved and they became satisfied that they were being treated equitably in the matter of urban improvements, the Association sought to give substance to their aspirations by bringing their neighbor-

hood closer, in fact and in reputation, to the center of metropolitan life downtown.

Much attention has been given to the impact of the electric streetcar on metropolitan dispersal and the resultant formation of streetcar suburbs. Yet, an equally important by-product of this improved form of rapid transit was that for the first time the downtown section of the city was readily accessible to those people who had for so long lived on the fringes of the city. This in itself was sufficient incentive for the men of the Association, lured as they were by the prospects of emulating downtown, to attempt to rally neighborhood opinion beyond the streetcar. Similarly, the downtown oriented members of the Association were more than likely aware of the successful attempts other cities had made to bridge dividing bodies of water: New York City and Brooklyn had spanned the East River with the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883; Boston had spanned the Charles, Pittsburgh the Allegheny, and Rochester the Genessee Gorge. For bridges, even over the Scajaquada Creek, brought the promise of greater access and inclusion in the life of the metropolis and for this reason won the enthusiastic support of the Association.

Yet, in their haste to end the real and imagined distances and difference between Black Rock and downtown Buffalo, the Association violated a large segment of local opinion which, as increasingly articulated by Alfred Tovey, the transplanted Canadian editor, was far more concerned with the perpetuation of a strong, if isolated neighborhood community than with the emulation of downtown's idea of metropolitan progress. Tovey, of course, had been as ardent a booster of Black Rock as any member of the Association. However, as his opposition to the streetcar legislation and the Charter of 1892 demonstrates, he was

unwilling to support any project that tended to weaken the structural cohesiveness of the neighborhood. It was with this in mind that Tovey took the Association to task for their plan for an additional roadway over the Scajaquada Creek: "The businessmen of Black Rock would far better serve the interests of this section of the city by concentrating on matters that would be of real benefit to the residents of the Rock."[62]

Tovey was not the only member of the Association who had become disillusioned with the activities of that group. Indeed, it seemed that the Businessmen enjoyed increasingly less support the more they deviated from their original localistic orientation. Their support of measures calculated to improve the quality of neighborhood life during the first years of the existence had created a neighoorhood consensus around their leadership and Tovey's Gazette. However, their strong advocacy of additional streetcars in disregard of strong neighborhood opposition and their support of the Charter of 1892, had cracked that consensus as more and more people in the neighborhood refused to endorse policies whose only visible effect was the erosion of the community; traditional localism. By 1896, the year of the abortive Scajaquada Creek arterial plan, several members began to question the Association's policies and in that year membership fell from a peak of forty-eight in 1895 to forty-one.[63] By 1898, membership had shrunk still lower to twenty-eight. Obviously shaken by this loss of faith, the remaining members lost direction and began to flounder and as membership continued to decline, there was a marked change in the Association's activities. The minute books of the last four years of the century show a great deal of attention to strictly social and ceremonial matters: an increasing number of banquets, card and sledding parties, and other similar functions. With the exception of the Exposition campaign of 1899, which generated a

temporary upsurge to forty-one members, the Association seems to have degenerated into nothing more than a social club. And on January 3, 1900, listing a total of nine members, the last entry was made into the minute books: "The Black Rock Businessmen's Association has voted unanimously to adjourn until further notice."[64]

The Association failed because it had abandoned the local orientation of their neighborhood constituency in pursuit of goals and ideals that had little relevance to the residents of Black Rock, the great majority of whom had little need for streetcars and improved arterial connection with downtown; who valued the scant amount of park space more than the approbation of the railroad interests; the security of ward representation, not the uncertainty of an at-large system; who envisioned the neighborhood as a symbol of localism and not of Pan-American unity. Thus, by underestimating the strength and persistence of Black Rock's neighborhood tradition, the Association failed in their efforts to redefine and reshape the structure of the community and its relationship with the rest of the city. However, out of this failure would emerge a new and different understanding of the neighborhood in the years following the Association's reorganization in 1905.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMPONENTS OF BLACK ROCK'S NEIGHBORHOOD ORIENTATION

The Black Rock Businessmen's Association dissolved in 1900 because it had been unable to convince the people of the neighborhood that the structure of the community and its relations with the rest of the city needed alteration. Rather, by rejecting the promise implicit in the Association's appeals, the residents of Black Rock made it quite apparent that they were content with the traditional arrangements of life within the neighborhood. For in spite of the combined pressures of an all pervasive metropolitan imperialism and the persuasive efforts of the Association, the strength of Black Rock's neighborhood tradition had prevailed. In the following pages I will explore the components of this tradition and attempt to show how its strength not only routed the hopes of the Association but also led to the conversion of these advocates of neighborhood metropolitanization so that in the years ahead they came to articulate a new and different understanding of the neighborhood community and its place within the metropolis.

In spite of the changes wrought by urbanization, neighborhood life in Black Rock remained strong well into the twentieth century. Indeed, all of the major ingredients of the neighborhood - the characteristics of the population, the economy, the background of its leaders, the use of local space and the persistence of people in the neighborhood - were the same following the Association's reorganization in 1905 as they

had always been. Black Rock's population, as recorded in the New York State Manuscript Census of 1905, for instance, had undergone no upheavals but rather continued along already established lines. In addition to the continued growth of the neighborhood's population - 1400 in 1855, 1740 in 1866, 2200 in 1875, 3170 in 1892, and 3620 in 1905 - (see Chart I on p. 19) the census indicated that for the first time families headed by native-born Americans were in the majority.[1] (see Chart II, p. 31) Although the number of American born had been growing gradually at the expense of those born abroad - particularly the Germans, long the dominant group here - as late as 1892 the former comprised only 43% of Black Rock's population.[2] As has been suggested earlier, this American born minority had played a vital role in Black Rock as the organizers of the Businessmen's Association; indeed, it was their American birth and the resultant attitudes about the neighborhood that suggests an explanation of their efforts to metropolitanize Black Rock, which, their modern and metropolitan aspirations not withstanding, was an ethnic enclave throughout the 1890's. Yet, by 1905 this was no longer true for by that year 56% of the families in Black Rock were now headed by native Americans versus the 43% of 1892.[3] (see Chart II) While German influence was still strong - 21% of the families were still headed by Germans, not to mention the great number of second and third generation Germans here - their numbers were steadily dwindling so that by 1905 the native American influence was greater than ever. The demographic profile of each street mirrored the demography of the neighborhood. On only two streets - Tonawanda and Amherst were foreign-born family heads in the majority due to a number of Germans here disproportionate to their number in the neighborhood as a whole.[4]

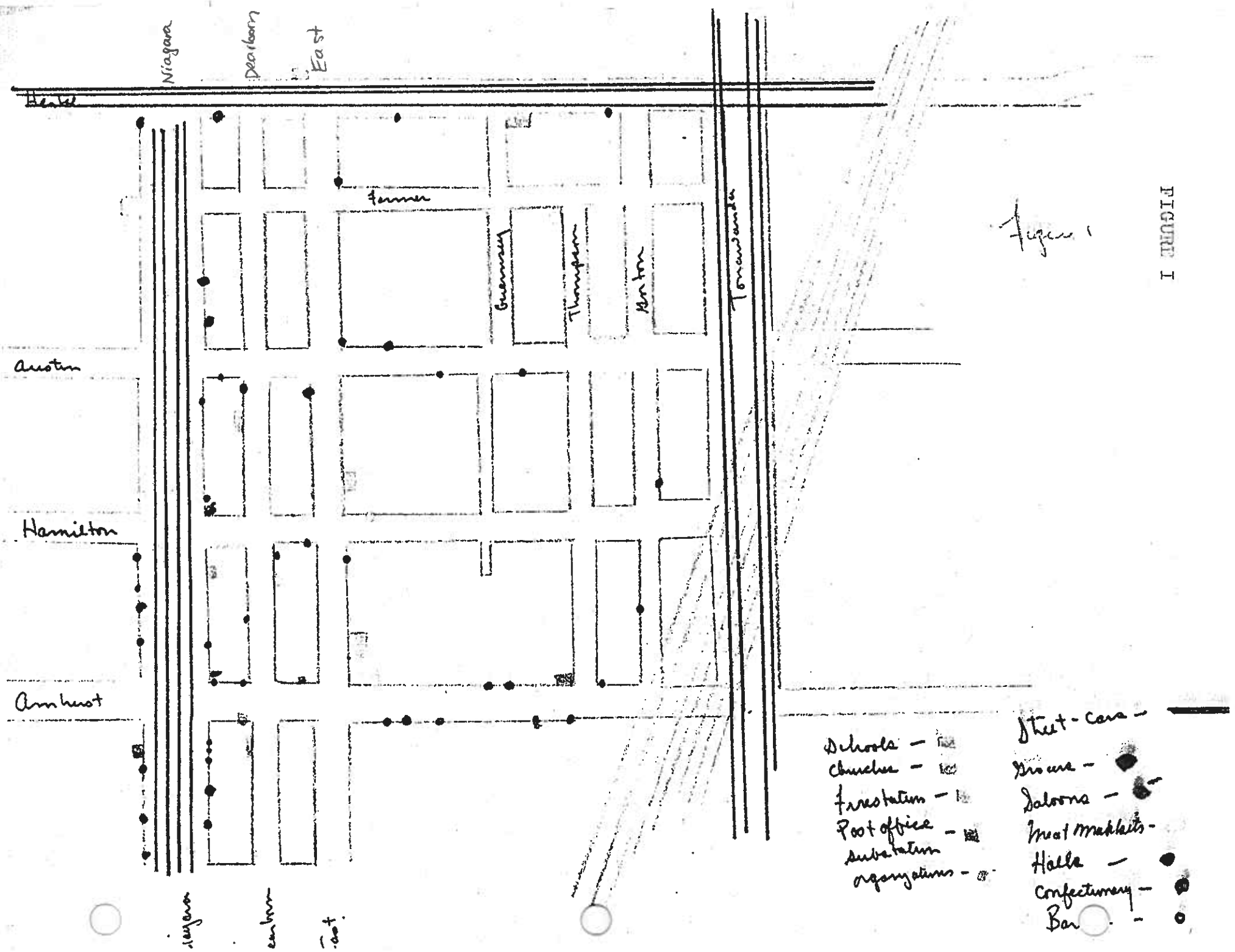
Other than the increase of Americans and the decline of the

Germans, there had been no major demographic upheaval in Black Rock by 1905. The other nationality groups - Canadians, English, and Irish - continued to comprise approximately the same proportion of the neighborhood's population as always, while the number of Poles in the neighborhood - forty-two - was so small as to make no noticeable impact. However, ethnic diversity remained an important characteristic of the neighborhood and when compounded with the area's historic isolation, was still another reason for Black Rock's reluctance to abandon its traditional localism.

Similarly, the economic development of Black Rock had been such that industrialization, rather than increase the neighborhood's dependence on the outside world, had strengthened the area's insularity and self-reliance. The existence of railroads here since before the Civil War facilitated the coming of industry and following the location of the Pratt and Letchworth iron mill on the banks of the Scajaquada Creek in 1866, Black Rock, particularly the area in the vicinity of the railroad tracks east of Tonawanda Street, continued to develop industrially. Thus, the pattern of the early twentieth century had been set in the late nineteenth century and while new factories continued to locate here after 1900, the economic character was not changed as a result.[5] Because of the ready availability of jobs within walking distance of Black Rock, the residents were able to adjust to industrialization without leaving the neighborhood for work, one of the main reasons why the Association's plea for streetcar lines had fallen on deaf ears. The arrival of large numbers of Poles adjacent to Black Rock during the 1880's and 1890's brought new workers to the area. Yet, because of the massive grade-level railroad crossings at Tonawanda, the Poles of Assumption Parish were kept at arms length until well into the twentieth century. Thus, these two factors of economic development - industrialization and massive Polish

migration - served to reinforce the neighborhood's insularity, whereas the opposite might well have resulted had neighborhood conditions been different.

Still another reason why the neighborhood had rejected the metropolitan ambitions of the Association was that over the years the residents had worked out a pattern of everyday neighborhood life which acted to strengthen the ties of the neighborhood community. The clearest example of this was the arrangement of physical space in Black Rock. Since the residents of Black Rock were dependent on the locale for most all aspects of their lives, there was an intensive use of similar places within the neighborhood. Because so many of the people used the same place for similar purposes, there was a great overlapping and interaction of neighborhood activities. This is indicated in Figure I. Here are chartered the commercial activities which fostered a high degree of neighboring: meat markets, saloons, grocers, and the like - and the major neighborhood institutions whose effect was similar: the post office substation, churches, and schools. It is clear that the bulk of these activities were concentrated in the vicinity of the Niagara-Amherst node with Amherst as far east as Thompson serving as an important spur. Within walking distance, then, of anybody living in Black Rock, were all the daily needs of the residents. Walking west on Amherst from Gorton one found four saloons, a fire station, two confectionary stores, a meat market, a grocery, Public School 20 on the corner of East and Amherst, and the large, weathered facade of the United Evangelical Church. Another church dominated the walk down Amherst: the tall steeple of St. Francis Xavier Church across the street from Public School 20, visible throughout the neighborhood, reminded residents of Black Rock of the long history of the neighborhood. Its facade, which still dominates the area, provided


Niagara
Dearborn
East
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Amherst
Austin
Tremaine
Schools –
Churches –
Prostitution –
Post office –
Substation
organizations –
Street-cars –
Saloons –
Meat Markets –
Halls –
Confectionery –
Bar –

FIGURE I

additional visual stability to this highly organized street-scape. Proceeding westward was the headquarters of the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association, the North Buffalo Catholic Institute, located in the large, stone house formerly belonging to Samuel W. Howell, the scrubby, vacant land known in the neighborhood as Amherst Park, two more taverns, and finally, the most important intersection in Black Rock, Niagara and Amherst streets, with its actual as well as psychological meaning in the life of the neighborhood. For Niagara was the artery which afforded Black Rock access to the rest of the City to the south or to Riverside and Tonawanda to the north. Here also was the Canal and the Niagara River, reminders of Black Rock's days as an independent rival of Buffalo and all the connotations this had in the mythology of the neighborhood. Here also was the heart of Black Rock, the center of the neighborhood's commercial activities: the Hatch Block, south of Amherst on Niagara: a sixty foot wide, five story brick business building, completed in 1886; a post-office substation across the street on the west side of Niagara, where local news and news from faraway places was exchanged. On the northeast corner were still more nodes of neighborhood activity: Philippbar's Tavern, housed in an imposing, Federal Style brick building - still another reminder of Black Rock's days of independence; Richard Humphrey's large feed store across the street on the west side of Niagara, a building given additional importance in the life of the neighborhood as the businessplace of one of Black Rock's leading citizens; and up the street at Niagara and Hamilton, the North Buffalo Hall, another remnant of pre-annexation Black Rock, and the site of many neighborhood business and social functions.[6]

There were other physical structures in the immediate vicinity of Amherst and Niagara which gave what Michael H. Frisch, in his study of

Springfield, Massachusetts, has called a "physical consciousness" to the neighborhood.[7] On Dearborn Street, just north of Amherst was the Dearborn Street Baptist, which like several of the other churches and institutions in the neighborhood, was founded during the 1880's.[8] On Dearborn south of Amherst was St. Mark's Episcopal which housed its small congregation in a modest frame building.[9] One block east of Dearborn was East Street, which in addition to being one of the most populous streets in Black Rock, was the location of the East Street Methodist and Ripley Memorial churches. The large red-brick facades of these buildings, both completed in the mid-1880's, contributed to the well-organized spaces within the neighborhood. Not all the imposing building of the neighborhood were churches and commercial establishments, however. At the southwest corner of Hertel and Niagara was John Hertel's Germania Park Hotel, a source of pride and delight among local people. Alfred Tovey of the Gazette described the way it looked in the early days of this century: "Its elegant dining room, commodious bay and magnificent apartments, to say nothing of the well-kept lawn in the rear, make it the favorite resort of pleasure seekers from all parts of the City."[10] While Tovey more than likely exaggerated its city-wide attraction, it is clear that he, like other people in Black Rock, were proud of Hertel's establishment, and its deterioration during the twentieth century must have been a disappointment to the neighborhood.

Thus, within this narrowly constricted area there was a great range of activities. Schools, taverns, churches, stores, all shared in their use of the street. The multiciplicity of use and, therefore, of meaning that the area had for the people of Black Rock staggers the contemporary viewer so used to homogeneous street uses. By day, the

area meant shopping, schooling, and all the informal contact fostered by walking the streets. By night, it meant something else: a meeting at the North Buffalo Catholic Institute or of the Businessmen's Association at the North Buffalo Hall or Philippbar's Tavern. And on Sunday, this node meant still something else: clean clothes, a walk down the quiet street to St. Francis Xavier or the other nearby churches where the contacts of the week were renewed. Thus, the street itself was a major locus of social activity. Points of contact were increased by the activity of the street and gave people an opportunity to work out their lives in a concrete highly definable spatial area. Thus, while there was nothing planned about this neighborhood environment it made a good deal of sense in terms of providing more meaning to neighborhood life.

Along with the major activities of the neighborhood, the most important buildings of the neighborhood had been constructed within this same small radius. On one level these buildings - the churches, the Federal Style tavern and North Buffalo Hotel - were important because of the real, day to day functions they filled. On another level, equally important in the development of the sense of community within the neighborhood, they heightened the image the residents of Black Rock had of their neighborhood. For wherever they looked they could see the large, imposing buildings which kept alive the area's past while making the present more visually coherent. This subjective arrangement of neighborhood space lent security and meaning to neighborhood life and it is little wonder that the residents opposed those plans of the Association which by disrupting the enclosed and controlled quality of physical space in the neighborhood would have violated the community's sense of physical order.[11]

The secure and highly legible quality of life in the physical neighborhood suggests an explanation for the high rate of persistence of families within Black Rock. Indeed, so compelling was the neighborhood for generations of residents that it is remarkable how many names of those people who first appeared in Black Rock in the New York State manuscript Census of 1855 can still be found, often living on the same street in Black Rock today. A full study of residential persistence in Black Rock over even a short period of time is beyond the limits set for this study. However, by taking a random sample of seven people from among the native American and German-born residents (at all times the dominant nationality groups in the neighborhood), on all of the ten streets in Black Rock in 1905 and tracing them back to the decade of their arrival in the neighborhood, there emerges a striking picture of persistence within this highly limited and clearly defined physical space.[12] The results of this exercise suggest still further explanation of rootedness in the neighborhood. That the families of fifteen people in the sample had been in the neighborhood since 1855, twenty-two since 1865, fourteen since 1875, six since 1885, and five since 1895, indicates how deeply ingrained was Black Rock's parochialism and how great were the odds against which the outward looking members of the Association had to fight in order to impose their metropolitan vision on the neighborhood. Not only isolated individuals but whole families chose to remain in close proximity within the neighborhood. Figure II shows the homes of several families in Black Rock in 1905 with kin in the neighborhood. Of five Sander kin one lived on Niagara, three on East, and one on Amherst; three Degenhart's lived on Dearborn and one on East; three Hoffmeyer's on Dearborn and one on East; three Argus' on Niagara and one on Amherst; one Dehlinger on East, two on Hamilton, and one on

Thompson; two Moser's on Niagara and two on Austin. The same closeness among kin groups applies for any number of Black Rock families throughout the period under study.[13]

Similarly, the persistence and continuity among the teachers at the local public school, an institution long assumed to be the most effective instrument for modernizing and Americanizing the more "backward" elements of the urban population, suggests a still further reinforcement of the localistic tradition. Using 1905 as an example, the teachers at Public School 20, located in the heart of Black Rock at Amherst and East streets, not only all lived in Black Rock, but ten of the school's sixteen teachers had taught there for more than twenty years.[14] Thus, two and sometimes three generations of Black Rock children often had the same teachers.

Still another source of neighborhood stability and predictability and a factor responsible for Black Rock's independence from the city beyond, was the striking number of organized social activities in the neighborhood. The eight clubs and fraternal organizations in existence when the Businessmen's Association had been formed in 1886 had multiplied more than two and a half times so that by 1905 social patterns here were as ordered and as meaningful as were the arrangements of physical space.[15] One of the most important of these neighborhood organizations was the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association which had organized in 1895. Thus, in the same year that the Businessmen's Association was working especially hard to improve Black Rock's access to the rest of Buffalo by means of a new arterial across the Scajaquada Creek, "sundry inhabitants" of the neighborhood formed a savings and loan association which by very definition aimed at lessening Black Rock's dependence on downtown institutions.[16] Thus, while the Businessmen hoped to

FIGURE II

Sander family
Hoffmann
Angus
Department
Dahlmann
Moser
Austin
Hamilton
Amherst

overcome the absence of local facilities by building bridges, actual as well as symbolic, to the rest of the city, the Savings and Loan Association sought to duplicate downtown facilities within Black Rock. Thus, it was the ideas of the Savings and Loan Association and not those of the earlier formed Association that came to prevail in Black Rock but this did not become fully apparent until the reorganization of the latter group in 1905.[17]

Unlike the founders of the Businessmen's Association, all but two of whom had been native Americans, the men chosen to serve as directors of the Savings and Loan Association were, with the exception of John Ailinger, a grocer and John Druar, a lawyer, all born in Germany and were all at least ten years older than the men who had formed the Businessmen's Association nine years earlier.[18] This, in addition to their lower economic status, helps to explain their more parochial orientation. For while membership in the Businessmen's Association was restricted to businessmen, the board of the S & L Association was a more accurate reflection of the prevailing occupational scale in Black Rock. The presence on the board in 1895 and 1905 of one "laborer", three "iron moulders", one blacksmith, and one motorman suggests that these men were more sensitive to the actual day to day needs of the neighborhood than was the membership of the Businessmen's Association.[19]

In one important respect, however, the members of both groups were similar for their leaders, like so many of their German and German-American neighbors, showed great persistence within the neighborhood. Chart III shows that the directors of the Savings and Loan Association in each ten year period from its founding in 1895 to its merger with the Riverside Savings and Loan Association in 1925, had been in the neighborhood long before their term of service began.[20] Although two of

CHART III

NAME, OCCUPATION, RESIDENCE OF DIRECTORS OF
BLACK ROCK SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION, 1895-1925*

NAME	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE 1885	1895
1895			
B. Nestor	laborer	Hoffman Pl.	same
J. Eimiller	engineer	80 Kail	128 Thompson
H. J. Sander	bookkeeper	249 Thompson	same
J. R. Ailinger	grocer	178 Thompson	same
H. Pfalzer	molder	92 Gorton	same
A. Alf	molder	156 Thompson	same
J. Schneggenburger	molder	308 Amherst	1981 Niagara
H. Sander	cooper	242 East	same
W. Mutz	motorman	55 Clay	Hoffman Plac
John Druar	attorney	223 Dearborn	same
1905		**	
G. Dehlinger	clerk	nl	nl
C. May	furniture store	112 Clay	249 East
C. Moser	saloon	125 Austin	same
F. X. Young	dry goods store	197 East	same
A. Ailinger	grocer	178 Thompson	same
F. M. Roessler	bookkeeper	1880 Niagara	same
J. Pfohl	blacksmith	nl	243 Gorton
F. X. Argus	hardware store	1916 Niagara	same
1915			
Wm. Brandt	coal store	376 Dearborn	139 Grace
A. J. Hoffmeyer	construction company	71 Thompson	282 Dearborn
P. J. Kogler	foreman	154 Gorton	same
Otto Noe	baker	nl	nl
H. J. Vollrath	newsstand	nl	167 Farmer
1925			
B. J. Sandor	plumber	231 East	same
W. Degenhart	heating company	86 Amherst	315 Dearborn
F. Philippbar	saloon	2051 Niagara	same

* List does not include directors serving in the previous ten year period.

** nl - not listed in City Directory

1905	1915	1925
same	same	nl
same	214 Thompson	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
4 Hoffman	same	145 Laird
same	same	same
same	same	same
212 East	same	39 Philadelphia
same	282 Dearborn	same
303 East	same	84 Philadelphia
same	same	same
same	same	same
same	538 Tonawanda	same
same	same	same
same	same	same
237 Ontario	same	same
1919 Niagara	same	same
1917 Niagara	same	94 Esser
same	same	same
same	same	same

these men (John Eimiller and Conrad May) had at one time lived east of the railroad tracks on Tonawanda Street, they had moved into Black Rock prior to their election to the Board. The extent to which the Savings and Loan Association had become so totally identified with Black Rock is demonstrated by the fact that even in the absence of residency requirements, all but three of the directors during the thirty years following 1895 came from Black Rock. Indeed, even after their terms had ended these men continued to live on in Black Rock in spite of the Association's increasing tendency to lend money to homeowners in Riverside after 1915.

Similarly, the leaders of both of the neighborhood groups shared a relative absence of occupational mobility as most all of them continued to work in the same trade or in the same business in 1925 as they had when they began their work on behalf of the neighborhood. In many cases the father was succeeded or joined by his son at his place of business. Frank Philippbar, a director of the Savings and Loan Association in 1925, had inherited his father's tavern at the corner of Niagara and Amherst, while William Degenhart, another 1925 director, had joined his father and older brother in Degenhart and Son's Heating and Plumbing. Occasionally there were qualitative intergenerational changes. For example, Henry Sander, a director of the Savings and Loan Association in 1895, was a blacksmith, while his son, B.J., a director in 1925, became the owner of a hardware store.[21] There were, however, a few cases of more dramatic upward mobility. H. J. Vollrath, a director in 1915 and an owner of a newsstand, had been a laborer in 1895. P. J. Kogler, also a director in 1915, had previously worked as a foreman and clerk at the Buffalo Manufacturing Company on Clinton Street. By 1925 he had become a vice-president of that company.[22] In spite of their occupational

mobility, these men, like their more static compeers, continued to live in Black Rock. While Vollrath moved from Farmer to Niagara Street, never once in his long upward climb did P. J. Kogler move out of his home on Gorton Street.

In spite of their extra-neighborhood and metropolitan ambitions, the leaders of the Businessmen were every bit as locally rooted as their comrades in the Savings and Loan Association. As Chart IV clearly shows, these men also showed a steady continuity of occupation and place of residence. This was not only true of the first generation leaders of the Association, for like William Degenhart mentioned above, both Henry and Joseph Hoffmeyer joined their father's construction company, while B. J. May and G. H. Sander also inherited their father's business. Their metropolitanizing efforts of the 1890's not withstanding, these men were as much a part of Black Rock as any one could be, a factor which makes more understandable their dramatic change in policy following their reorganization in 1905.

Although the men of these two associations were neighbors of long duration, their ideological differences about what was best for Black Rock resulted in an almost total absence of official communication between the two groups prior to 1905. It is indeed odd that with the exception of John Ailinger there was not one member of the Businessmen's Association on the founding board of the Savings and Loan Association. (see Chart III) While this might well be attributed to the ethnic, economic, and age differences of the two groups, it is more likely than not that the founders of the earlier group were loathe to become involved with a group whose hopes were the opposite of what they were trying to achieve for Black Rock. However, by 1905 the presence of Frank Argus, Conrad May, and Charles Moser, all member of the Businessmen's Association,

CHART IV

NAME, OCCUPATION, RESIDENCE OF OFFICERS OF
BLACK ROCK BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION, 1885-1935*

	NAME	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE 1885	1895
1885				
	John Esser	mill owner	81 Amherst	same
	Mich. Nealy	grocer	253 Dearborn	same
	W. E. Plummer	box factory owner	153 Dearborn	same
	Richard Humphrey	feed,coal store	1980 Niagara	152 Dearborn
	A. E. Tovey	printer	1724 Niagara	same
1895				
	W. C. Hill	grocer	2124 Niagara	same
	J. P. Melnoff	barber	1983	same
1905				
	F. X. Argus	hardware store	1916 Niagara	same
	Charles Moser	saloon	125 Austin	same
	Conrad May	furniture store	112 Clay	249 East
1915			**	
	B. J. Sander	plumbing company	nl	231 East
	A. J. Hoffmeyer	construction co.	71 Thompson	282 Dearborn
1925				
	Joseph Hoffmeyer	construction co.	71 Thompson	282 Dearborn
	J. C. Degenhart	heating co.	315 Dearborn	315 Dearborn
	George Klein	real estate	nl	nl
1935				
	H. Hoffmeyer	construction co.	nl	282 Dearborn
	E. C. Brennan	men's furnishings	nl	27 Garfield
	G. H. Sander	plumbing co.	nl	1917 Niagara
	E. J. May	clothing store	nl	249 East
	G. Huetter	jeweler	nl	1925 Niagara
	J. C. Degenhart	draftsman	nl	315 Dearborn

* Officers reelected from one year to the next are not included

** not listed in City Directory

*** assumed deceased

1905	1915	1925	1935
same	245 Dearborn	nl***	
same	nl***		
same	same	same	deceased
same	same	same	nl***
same	same	same	same
same	same	nl***	
same	same	same	nl***
same	same	same	nl***
same	same	same	same
same	same	same	nl***
same	same	same	same
same	same	same	same
same	same	same	same
same	same	same	same
110 Hamilton	same	same	same
same	same	same	same
same	same	444 Dearborn	same
same	same	348 Dearborn	same
same	same	325 Dearborn	same
same	same	325 East	same
same	same	same	same

on the board of the S & L Association, suggests a new found consensus which was to have a great impact on the neighborhood.

Prior to their five year adjournment in 1900, the Black Rock Businessmen's Association had been working in the vacuum of their own ideas about the neighborhood, cut off from the diurnal needs and demands of the common man in the community. Unencumbered by the more mundane concerns which occupied the Savings and Loan Association, these neighborhood visionaries were free to advance daring, if unwanted proposals, which, if enacted, would have irreparably altered the structure and quality of neighborhood life. As we shall see, the new policy of the Association following their reorganization found them taking a much more active role in the daily life of the neighborhood. One result of this increased involvement was the clannishness which came to characterize neighborhood leadership following 1905. For in addition to the increasingly intimate relationship between the Businessmen's Association and the Savings and Loan Association, the trustees of St. Francis Xavier Church, the largest and most important congregation in Black Rock, were also drawn from the same ranks of neighborhood leaders. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the same handful of people controlled all three of these neighborhood institutions. The absence of church records prior to 1900 makes impossible any conclusion about the interrelationship between St. Francis and the associations in earlier years, but even if it had been as great then as it came to be in the years between 1900 and 1935 when only seven of a total of twenty-eight church directors had never served on either the boards of the Businessmen or the Savings and Loan, the impact these interlocking directorships had on the neighborhood could not have been as strong prior to 1905.[23] (see Chart V) The main difference after 1905

CHART V

THE TRUSTEES OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE BREMA AND THE BRS&LA, 1900-1935

NAME	ADDRESS	OCCUPATION	BREMA	BRS&LA
1900				
John Esser	81 Amherst	miller	x	
Conrad May	249 East	furniture store	x	x
Otto Midnich	1975 Niagara	confectioner		
A.J. Hoffmeyer	282 Dearborn	construction	x	x
J.Schneggenburger	124 Amherst	molder		x
John Druar	223 Dearborn	attorney		x
Anthony Alf	156 Thompson	molder		x
J. Degenhart	315 Dearborn	heating co.	x	
1905				
J. Gilsdorf	135 Thompson	teamster		
H. Newhouse	304 Dearborn	toolmaker		
A.J. Ailinger	178 Thompson	grocer	x	x
Otto Noe	237 Ontario	baker		x
F.X. Argus	1916 Niagara	hardware store	x	x
H. Sander	249 East	cooper		x
Esser	81 Amherst	mill owner	x	
May	249 East	furniture store	x	x
1915				
A. Pfalzer	251 Dearborn	driver		x
G. Dehlinger	4 Hartmann	clerk		x
C. Moser	133 Austin	clerk		x
A.J. Hoffmeyer	282 Dearborn	construction co.	x	x
A. Alf	156 Thompson	molder		x
F.X. Argus	1916 Niagara	hardware store	x	
C. May	249 East	furniture store	x	x
J. Degenhart	315 Dearborn	heating business	x	
1925				
Jacob Sommer	34 Austin	truck driver		
B. J. Sander	231 East	plumber	x	
F. Philippbar	2051 Niagara	tavern keeper	x	x
P. Kogler	154 Gorton	businessman		x
F. M. Roessler	84 Philadelphia	clerk		x
A.J. Hoffmeyer	282 Dearborn	construction	x	x
A.J. Ailinger	178 Thompson	grocer	x	x
J. C. Degenhart	315 Dearborn	draughtsman	x	

CHART V, cont.

NAME	ADDRESS	OCCUPATION	BRBMA	BRS&LA
1935				
J.C. Degenhart	315 Dearborn	draftsman	x	
P. Blust	90 Austin	tailor		
George Klein	248 Dearborn	real estate	x	
A. Hoffmeyer	282 Dearborn	construction co.	x	
F. Philippbar	2051 Niagara	tavern	x	
G.H. Sander	325 East	plumbing	x	
J. Hartmann	335 Dearborn	truckdriver		

Sources: Annual Statements of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church, and Minutes of the BRBMA and the BRS&LA in conjunction with City Directories for each year.

was that for the first time in the history of the neighborhood there was no consistent organ or advocate of metropolitan ideology creating a vacuum in which the neighborhood orientation was able to flourish.

Thus, there was a deeply entrenched tradition of localism in Black Rock which extended as far back in the neighborhood's history as the early nineteenth century when the separate and independent village of Black Rock rivaled Buffalo for commercial supremacy along the Niagara Frontier. Although independence was lost with annexation in 1855, that part of Black Rock north of the Scajaquada Creek, isolated as it was from the major centers of settlement downtown and populated by large numbers of German immigrants, developed separately from the rest of the city. By the late 1870's and early 1880's Black Rock had become an important industrial section of Buffalo and with its own economic life, a full complement of local stores and businesses, a social, cultural, and religious life of its own, its residents, rarely venturing beyond the confines of their own neighborhood, developed a highly limited, yet extremely compelling vision of the urban world. It is important to note, however, that the strong neighborhood orientation which took hold in Black Rock during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, developed among an ethnically diverse people and not, as frequently assumed by observers of city life, among an ethnically cohesive citizenry. For while Germans as a whole did predominate among both immigrant and second and third generation Americans, there was, as Chart II (p. 31) indicates, sufficient ethnic heterogeneity throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century which, in addition to the differentiation between German Catholics and Protestants, dispels the notion that neighboring was limited to cohesive nationality groups. Thus, in addition to the neighborhood's history, to the traditions and common

memories of an earlier Black Rock, it was the pattern of daily life there which strengthened the ties of the neighborhood community which not even the combined pressures of an aggressive, centrifugal metropolitan culture and a persuasive, centripetal neighborhood leadership could overcome. Always vigorous, Black Rock's neighborhood orientation was to become still more impelling during the early years of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER V

HOW PROXIMITY TO A NEW AND DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOOD AFFECTED BLACK ROCK

Black Rock's self-image as a neighborhood and its understanding of its relationship to the rest of the metropolis were derived not only from its inherent neighboring traits, but also from its interaction with two new and different neighborhoods whose initial growth during the 1880's coincided with the fruition of community sentiment in Black Rock. First, there was the Polish Parish of Assumption Church, east of the railroad tracks at Tonawanda Street. Then there was suburban Riverside, adjacent to the Niagara River north of Hertel Avenue. As these neighborhoods grew they both influenced and were influenced by the structure and attitudes of the neighborhood in Black Rock and are, therefore, important in our understanding of that community.

The area east of the railroad tracks at the intersection of Amherst and Tonawanda streets - known after 1888 as Assumption Parish - had been isolated from the older neighborhood in Black Rock since the very beginnings of settlement north of the Scajaquada Creek. As we have seen, Black Rock's early growth had been centered along the Niagara-Amherst node alongside the Erie Canal, and while there had been some isolated settlement in the area east of Tonawanda, it was limited to approximately 98 people in 1855.[1] It was not until the 1870's and 1880's when the Amherst-Tonawanda axis became a major railroad crossing that the area became a settlement of considerable size and importance.

By 1884 nine railroad line crossed here and there were three freight and passenger stations in the immediate vicinity.[2] Thus, even before the heavy Polish migration of the mid-1880's, the future of the neighborhood was determined. For example, the existence of the railroad network made the area a desirable site for new industry and throughout the 1880's and 1890's there was a steady increase in the number of industries here so that by the turn of the century there were sixteen factories north of the Creek and east of the railroad tracks.[3] In addition to their economic impact the grade-level railroads acted as a barrier between the two neighborhoods and as such played a critical role in the relationship that was to develop between Black Rock and Assumption. That this barrier came to be more than physical explains a great deal about the new neighborhood of Assumption and the older neighborhood of Black Rock.

While the north-south bound rails dividing the area were responsible for the industrialization of the Parish, it was the Belt Line, completed in 1883, an intra-urban freight and commuter line which circled the city, that brought in the settlers. A study of the non-Poles living here in 1905 (the Poles will be discussed below) shows that while a few of them had been here since annexation in 1855 and a few more had come from Black Rock, by far the greatest majority - 68% of the Americans, 77% of the Germans, 80% of the Irish, 69% of the English - had come from other sections of the city sometime after 1883, clear indication of the importance of the Belt Line in the social geography of the city.[4] Similarly, the completion of the Belt Line and the division of the large land-holdings here occurred simultaneously. A study of the Buffalo City Atlases in 1874 and 1884 reveals that it was during this period that the large tracts of absentee owned land along Amherst Street were sold to

individual settlers. This subdividing process continued throughout the 1880's and by 1894 almost every lot on both sides of Amherst as far east as Bush had been improved while the side streets were filling up rapidly.[5] (see Map II)

Similarly, the completion of the Belt Line aroused the interest of Black Rock entrepreneurs and as they became more aware of the commercial opportunities in this rapidly developing section, increasingly more of them became active here. During the summer of 1887 William Degenhart, a Niagara Street dry-goods dealer and member of the Association, opened a branch store on Amherst and Military "for the benefit of the growing number of customers in that direction."[6] Several months later Charles Monnen, a Niagara Street tavern keeper, opened a saloon on Amherst and Churchill.[7] The construction in 1888 of Assumption, a Polish national church, accelerated this eastward movement of Black Rock merchants: in the summer and fall of 1888 Jacob Meyer and Fred Zoerner, both grocers in the older neighborhood, opened new establishments, one at Amherst and Germain, the other at Amherst and Peter, both directly across from the new church. However, unlike the incoming Polish migrants, these German-American merchants from the older section of Black Rock had no intention of settling and throughout their years of doing business here they remained separate and apart from the developing neighborhood apparatus in Assumption.

Although most of the incoming residents bought their lots from downtown real estate agents handling the property of the Birds, Townshends and the other owners of large tracts here, there were several Black Rock realtors who listed property in the area.[8] These men, like the merchants above, became commercially active in the neighborhood once it became apparent that the Poles were coming in large numbers. In

1887 George Denner and J. J. Angell, two Thompson Street partners in real estate, opened a branch office at 71 Kail Street.[9] Later in the year Charles and Joseph Burkhardt, another Black Rock real estate firm, advertised in the Gazette that they had "Cheap Building Lots" for sale in the western sections of Amherst Street and on Bridgeman, Grote, and Chandler.[10] While these agents were involved in only a small percentage of the one hundred and eighty sales transacted here in 1887 and 1888, their activity, along with that of the tavern-keepers and grocers who ventured into the area for business, was a clear indication that, as the Gazette noted, "this part of the Rock is booming with a vengeance."[11]

While Tovey seems to include the area east of the tracks in his above geographical understanding of Black Rock, the leading spokesmen for the neighborhood had shown little interest in the area. Both the Gazette and the Black Rock Businessmen's Association had ignored the area since their founding. As late as 1888 it was not possible to buy a copy of the Gazette anywhere outside of Black Rock.[12] Similarly, when the Association organized in the spring of 1886, there seemed to have been no question but that their eastern boundary line would be drawn at Tonawanda. The wide gulf which separated these two settlements as a result of the vast railroad and industrial network at Tonawanda and Amherst increased with the coming of the Poles to the area in large numbers following the completion of the Belt Line. With this migration the attitude of the older neighborhood in Black Rock changed from one of neglect to one of conscious avoidance and hostility. As the Polish population grew during the late 1880's and early 1890's, there was not a single reference to their arrival. When the Gazette finally did take notice of them it was in the least flattering terms; "The Polack community

is affected with an epidemic of skin disease."[13] Towards the end of 1888 as the Church neared completion, the paper noted that the "Poles constitute a large item of the eastern section of Amherst Street." In a snide reference to the crowded living conditions prevailing among them, the Gazette reported that "the Polacks believe that it is not good for men to be alone." In what was probably a representative opinion, Tovey concluded that "In the Sweet-Bye-Bye they may be desirable acquisitions but are not looked upon in that light now."[14]

The history of the Poles in ~~Black Rock~~ is intertwined with the history of the Polish migration into the city at large. Mass Polish migration had its distinct beginnings in 1854 and increased with the disastrous Polish insurrection of 1863. This, in addition to Bismarck's process of Germanization and the continued depressed economic conditions in Poland, caused waves of immigration from each section of partitioned Poland, with a vast majority coming to the United States.[15] The Federal Census of 1850 shows that in that year there were thirty-four Poles living in Buffalo where on the East Side of the city they had begun what would eventually become a large and permanent Polish community. By 1875 the number of Polish natives in Buffalo had increased to 516, most of whom lived on Ash, Spruce, Walnut, Sycamore, and Genessee Streets.[16] It was this group that formed the embryo of the mother parish of Buffalo's Polish community: the Parish of St. Stanislaus, at Peckham and Townshend Streets. By 1878 the number of Poles here had increased to such an extent that the small parish had doubled its membership and in 1886 St. Adelbert's Parish on Stanislaus and Rother was formed.[17] Two years later there was established still another Polish parish - Assumption - in the largely unsettled section of Black Rock east of the railroad tracks at Amherst and Tonawanda. The growth of this area as a Polish

neighborhood tells us much about the dynamics of neighborhood building in general and more important, it reveals a good deal about the nature of the older community in Black Rock which was just then beginning to develop a neighborhood identity of its own.

The Poles who came to settle in the vicinity of Black Rock were truly striking out on their own for not only did they come to a relatively unsettled area but they came with no encouragement from the reigning Polish patriarch at St. Stanislaus, Father John Pitass. Pitass, eager to guarantee his control over the growing Polish community in his parish, had been reluctant to approve the formation of St.Adelbert's and, therefore, it is unlikely that he favored the dispersal of the Poles as far away as Black Rock.[18] But the availability of jobs in the large factories - particularly at Pratt and Letchworth - on the northern banks of the Scajaquada Creek and the convenience of the Belt Line, prior to the electric car the fastest and cheapest form of intra-urban transportation, enabled any venturesome Pole from the East Side of Buffalo to move to the eastern section of Black Rock and by 1888 approximately thirty Polish families had settled on Amherst Street east of the railroads.[19]

As pioneers in the area they had to make-do with what neighborhood facilities they found and for the first several years between the completion of the Belt Line and the construction of Assumption Church, life here could not have been pleasant. Unlike the non-Polish people who also came to the area after 1883, the Poles found little comfort in attending the English and German services at St. Francis Xavier, the German Catholic Church at Amherst and East. Not only were the languages and religious practices here alien to them, but the long walk down Amherst Street across the grade-level railroads at the Tonawanda Street

intersection was sufficiently dangerous that it discouraged the trip.[20] Thus, within several years, the thirty-odd Poles who had become members of St. Francis, resolved to petition the Bishop of Buffalo for permission to form a parish church of their own. Under the leadership of two Polish foundry workers and two saloon keepers, negotiations were held with the Bishop who in October, 1888, gave his approval to the venture. Later that month a plot of land on Amherst between Germain and Peter was purchased and construction of Assumption Church and School was begun. On December 6, 1888, the plain wood frame building was formally dedicated and a priest was installed.[21]

The completion of the church provided an incentive to the Poles on the East Side, unhappy with the stern patriarchal rule of Father Pitass, to move. In the years after 1888 the area in the vicinity of Assumption grew rapidly. Although it is difficult to determine the size of the Polish population in non-census years, the records of the Church give some indication of the rapidity of the parish's growth. By 1895 there were 205 families who belonged to the congregation. Given an average family size of five, plus an average of 1.5 boarders per family, the total Polish population of the parish was approximately 1,362.[22] Polish in-migration continued throughout the 1890's and as it did there was a steady increase in the number of Poles buying plots of land and building homes here.[23] A study of the real estate transactions ~~columns of the~~ Gazette shows that unlike the development of the Polish East Side where in the early history of that community one man sold over four hundred lots, the development of Black Rock was achieved by hundreds of individual transactions. This factor, in addition to the high incidence of home ownership here, prevented the construction of tenements in the parish.[24]

In spite of the comments of the Gazette, living conditions among the Poles, even though the great majority of them were day laborers, were similar to those prevailing in Black Rock. While there were several instances of heinous over-crowding, for example at 341 Amherst Street, a three story frame dwelling which housed seven families and nine boarders, the majority of people lived in surroundings quite similar to the two and three family homes which characterized the older neighborhood.[25] While there were considerably more boarders among the Polish families of the Parish than among the non-Poles, housing conditions were far from the worst in the city.[26] And in spite of the economic precariousness of the Polish workers here, the Health Department was able to report in 1905 that Assumption Parish "is characterized by the absence of congestion and overcrowding, by boarding conditions in fair shape and by building mostly of the two story detached type with sufficient yard space for ventilation and light."[27]

If the housing conditions were similar to those which prevailed in Black Rock, so too was the commercial profile of the Parish. The completion of the church made the area a perfect place for the development of many church related businesses and by 1905 there was a whole range of Polish owned businesses: a funeral parlor, two florists, and over a half a dozen saloons within the shadow of the church spire. By that year Amherst between Peter and Germain, although still the central node of the neighborhood, was only one of several important areas of activity. At the intersection of Amherst and Grant were several more Polish-owned operations, while non-Poles owned Rubin's Men's Store, Clark's Barbershop, Young's Billiard Parlor, and Heist's Moving Company. To the north at the multiple intersection of Grant, Military, and Amherst, presently the site of the Unity Theatre, was Senf's Cigar Store, Vlater's

Drugs, and Olszewsk's Saloon. Thus, by the turn of the century the Poles in Assumption Parish had formed the basis of a solid neighborhood of their own. There was no greater evidence of this than the intricate and vibrant social life that existed in the parish.

The most obvious fact about the organizational structure of the Parish is that no group but the Poles were represented. There was nothing inevitable about the ghettoization of the Parish, for as Chart VI indicates, the population of Assumption in 1905 was fairly evenly distributed between Poles and non-Poles. A head count of the people listed in the New York State Manuscript Census of 1905 shows that of 3,969 people living within the limits of the parish, only 33% or 210 of them were Polish born or Americans born into Polish families. The rest were born in America, Germany, Canada, Ireland, Hungary, England, and Sweden. In spite of the fact that nationalities other than the Poles dominated the population of the parish, they never had an institutional or social life which reflected this. With the sole exceptions os St. Elizabeth's Hungarian Church founded on Grant Street in 1907 and a small Roumanian Catholic congregation founded on Germain Street in 1912, there had never been a church or social institution which served the non-Polish population.[29] While Americans and Germans had come to live in the area at approximately the same time as the Poles and continued to live here throughout the early years of the twentieth century, the existence of a highly organized neighborhood in Black Rock obviated the duplication of neighborhood institutions in Assumption so that from the very beginning the structure of neighborhood life was run by and for the Polish minority.

Other than its domination by Poles, neighborhood life in Assumption was hardly different than what it was in Black Rock. In both

CHART VI

NATIONALITY, NUMBER, AND PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION IN ASSUMPTION PARISH, 1905

NATIONALITY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION
American	1045	.26
Polish*	1210	.33
German	911	.22
Canadian	254	.06
Irish	223	.06
Hungarian	141	.05
English	132	.03
Swedes	53	.01
Total	3969	

* Includes children of Polish born parents.

NATIONALITY, NUMBER, AND PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION IN ASSUMPTION PARISH, 1915

NATIONALITY	NUMBER	+ OR - SINCE 1905	PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION
American	590	-455	.08
Poles	5306	+4096	.75
Germans	478	-433	.07
Canadians	121	-133	.01
Irish	68	-155	.009
Hungarians	408	+267	.05
English	40	-92	.005
Swedes	11	-42	.001
Total	7302		

Source: New York State, Manuscript of the Census, 1905, 1915.

places there were so many overlapping areas - church, work, home and social life - that group activities were a dominant factor in the neighborhood. The extended family was an extremely important institution in both. Like the many German and American families who often lived on the same block in Black Rock, the members of the average Polish family in Assumption lived close enough to each other that for all intents and purposes these separate households functioned as separate units of one extended family. The Rybacki family is a case in point. Edward Rybacki came to Buffalo in 1897 with a ticket mailed to him by his brother Joseph, a day laborer who lived with his family at 48 Howell Street.[30] Edward moved in with his brother and lived here until 1903 when he married Annette Witacki of 68 Howell.[31] Following his marriage, Edward, also a day laborer, moved into his own flat in the rear of his brother's Howell Street home.[32] By 1905 he had been joined by his mother. Thus, by 1905 both Rybacki brothers along with their mother were living at 48 Howell while two of the Rybacki sisters were living nearby at 18 Peter and 487 Amherst, respectively.[33] Every Friday night this extended family group - mother, sons, daughters, and sons-in-law - all of them living within a block of each other, met to play pennyante poker at one of their homes. Joe Rybacki, Jr. recalls that the family often visited each other. Similarly, the two sisters often shopped at the local stores together; both brothers worked when they could at Pratt and Letchworth and joined their brothers-in-law on the baseball team of the neighborhood Sokol Society.[34]

Another typical example of Polish family life in Assumption Parish is the Zylinski family. Frank was the first Zylinski to come to America. After spending some time in New York City he came to Buffalo in 1887 where he made his first home among his countrymen in St.Stanislaus

Parish on the East Side. During the 1890's he followed the course of the Belt Line and came to Black Rock where by 1905 he lived over his own dry goods shop at 12 Peter Street.[35] Several years later he mailed a steamship ticket to his brother-in-law Bronislaw Narocki in Poland who with his wife moved in with Zylinski on Peter Street.[36] When several years later the Narocki's had children of their own, they moved into their own flat above Mrs. Narocki's sister and brother-in-law, Michael Kubacki at 442 Amherst.[37] And as in the case of the Rybacki's it was the family unit which according to Frank Zylinski's son, Ernest, played the most important role in the social life of the Parish.[38]

What these examples reveal is that while extended members of a family did not always live within the same household, they lived close enough so that they offered each other a self-reliant social group. Not only was this true of the native born Poles, but the first generation as it grew up and married continued this perpetuation of the neighboring family. A study of the marriage licenses on file in the Marriage Bureau in the Buffalo City Hall shows that of the more than 2,000 applications submitted by Assumption Parish Poles between 1905-1925, only 123 married out of their parish and went on to live in other sections of the city. These 123 people are fairly equally spread out over the twenty-five year period so that it is impossible to say that boldness increased with length of time in America.[39]

An equally important component of community life in Assumption Parish was peer group society. Here, more so than in Black Rock, where migration to the area over a long period of time resulted in a more stratified society, the neighborhood was made up of a society of equals. Not only were these people from identical ethnic and religious backgrounds, but the fact that they had come at approximately the same time

and that the greatest majority of them in 1905 as in 1915 worked as day laborers, tended to minimize class distinctions within the neighborhood. Indeed there seems to have been little distinction between those who were better off -- the tavern keepers, store owners, and the few lawyers who had begun to appear by 1905 - and rest of the working class population. Whatever economic differences did exist were lessened by the fact that regardless of economic differences, everybody lived on the same block, in similar houses, attended the same church, joined the same social groups, and frequented the same taverns. In fact, it was the tavern that was the great leveler in the neighborhood without which the neighborhood peer groups would not have been nearly as strong. It was in the tavern that the three segments of the neighborhood occupational ladder: the day laborers, foundry workers, and merchants found common ground. As much as the Church, the tavern was the backbone of neighborhood life and the saloon keeper rivaled, and often surpassed the priest as the most influential member of the community. When in 1908 a group of East Side Poles published profiles of "Leading Buffalo Poles", all eight of the people from Black Rock included in the Album had at one time or other owned a saloon.[40]

Not only did the saloon serve as the great gathering place for the men of the neighborhood, as a democratizing force in a neighborhood of equals, but it was the birthplace of neighborhood leadership. One of these men was Frank Kozlowski who had come to Black Rock in 1889 after spending several years on the East Side.[41] His first job was in the scrap yards at Pratt and Letchworth but by 1892 he had managed to put together enough money to open a saloon across from Assumption Church on Amherst and Germain. In 1893 he became Treasurer of the Parish Committee and President of the Brotherhood of the Young Men of St.Joseph

and of the Society of St. Adelbert. By 1908 he had opened another saloon at Bridgman and Amherst and was the owner of two two-family homes in the five hundred block of Amherst Street. Kozlowski sponsored the first baseball team in the area and his tavern across from the church was the neighborhood ticket agency for the Hamburg-American Line and the North German Lloyd Steamship Company.

Another tavern was opened by Albert Szezepanik in 1893, ten years after his arrival from Poland and five years after the Belt Line carried him north from Broadway. After several years in the P & L yards he invested "all his savings" and bought a two family home and tavern on Amherst Street two blocks from the Church. By the early years of the twentieth century, Szezepanik, like Kozlowski, had purchased another two family home at 411 Amherst which he rented to two Polish families. Szezepanik's importance in the neighborhood is demonstrated by the fact that when the Polish Cadets opened its own headquarters in 1913 he was elected its first president.[42]

Joseph Trudnowski provides one of the best examples of the way the tavern keeper was defined by the people of the neighborhood and the importance of his role in the life of the neighborhood. Trudnowski differed from the above mentioned men in that he arrived as a child in Black Rock from Poland via the East Side. Thus, unlike them he attended Assumption School and later graduated from Public School 20 at Amherst and East Street, and, therefore, spoke not only Polish but English and German as well.[43] Although his education and his ability to speak three languages might have enabled him to get work outside of the neighborhood, the ties of the locale were too great and in 1902 with an eight hundred dollar loan from the Erie County Savings Bank he opened a saloon at Amherst and Howell. The tavern occupied the ground floor of a two story

frame building and here on two large plate glass windows, one looking out at Amherst, the other on Howell, were heavy white letters spelling out the name of the owner. Over these windows were two large canvas awnings which protected the benches that Trudnowski kept in front of the saloon during the warmer months of the year. Inside a tile floor and tile walls reflected the low burning gas light that lit the large room. The walls were decorated with religious icons, a picture of President Theodore Roosevelt, several calendars, fliers announcing a meeting of the Polish Cadets and the Parish Committee of Assumption, groups in which Trudnowski was active. On the right as you entered was a large bulletin board reserved for announcements: the Sokol society baseball team practice, flats for rent and homes for sale; a subscription list for the Polish Relief Fund and the Polish Army Fund; departure and arrival dates of leading steamship lines and other news related to the life of the neighborhood. At the far end of the room was a long wooden bar: "The Longest Bar in (Assumption Parish Black Rock"), tended during the lunch hour and after work rush hours by both Mr. and Mrs. Trudnowski. At other times, Mrs. Trudnowski or Joe, Jr. presided over the many shelves of wine, whiskey, beer, brandied fruits, hard boiled eggs, pickled vegetables, packages of cheese and bread all neatly arranged on the long wooden shelves. Toward one end of the bar was a cash register and a small safe. Next to it was a counter where people could buy stamps and receive their mail. To the far left of the bar was a narrow, short hall which led beyond to a closed door into a large interior office. It was here that Trudnowski presided over his many diverse activities. Joe Trudnowski filled even more functions than the other tavern keepers mentioned here. Not only was he too a ticket agent for two steamship lines, but he was also a registered real estate broker as well as a bona-fide insurance

salesman for the Hartford Life Insurance Company.[44]

Although there were many similarities between Trudnowski's tavern and for example, Hetizman's on Dearborn Street in Black Rock, there were important differences which tell us much about the structure of neighborhood social organization. The crucial difference lay not in the function of the tavern itself for in this way they were identical, but rather in the role played by the individual tavern keeper. For in the absence of officials elected locally and the lack of the neighborhood self-help organizations like the BRBMA and the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association which existed in Black Rock, a vast leadership vacuum developed in Assumption which came to be filled by the most visible man in the neighborhood, the man who had the most contact with the most people. This was most obviously the parish priest. But because of the sharp line Polish priests have drawn between secular and religious matters in their communities, the mantle of local leadership fell naturally to another highly visible neighborhood figure, the tavern keeper.[45]

It is, therefore, not surprising that Trudnowski was the first Pole in Assumption to own an automobile, for by 1905 he had become the neighborhood's most worldly and mobile man in terms of his contact with the rest of the city. As such, his most important function in the neighborhood was to serve as the liaison man with the outside world. In addition to his activities as a ticket broker and as an insurance agent, one of the more interesting services he performed was that of a local banker. In the absence of branch banks in the Parish - like other Black Rock institutions the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association did not open a branch here - many people deposited their savings with Trudnowski and he in turn deposited the money in a trust account in a downtown bank.[46]

Although the services which Trudnowski performed on behalf of his neighbors was important in the life of the community, as an individual he was still more important for above all he was a model for the Polish speaking day laborer who harbored dreams of one day becoming successful himself. In this way the tavern by serving as a social center where the workers of the area could seek the comforting company of their own kind, a refuge from the work of the week - and the tavern keeper - who had achieved a degree of success far more visible than any other person in the neighborhood - solidified the ties that bound this peer group society together and kept alive the dreams of success which must often have been derailed by the difficulties of everyday life. By serving as a model of success while still retaining his deep ties to the community, Trudnowski not only kindled faith in the future but provided a major source of neighborhood identification. As a result, he had achieved a position of power and prestige not found and more importantly not expected of the tavern keeper of Black Rock.

From any direction on the Scajaquada Creek Expressway, the view today is dominated by the two gigantic towers of Assumption Church. They loom larger then the State University College on Elmwood Avenue, they dwarf the sprawling McKinley Vocational High School, and tower above the decaying industrial plants which still dot the northern banks of the Creek. Even while driving by quickly, the Church provides a basic reference point which unifies what would otherwise be another undistinguished, drab view. The power of this structure is still more obvious when walking through the Parish. Set on a square block on Amherst between Germain and Peter, Assumption Church breaks the tidy line of one and two family homes in the area. Its massive height and breadth are ungainly, like a cathedral in a prairie town. However, its

size is not inappropriate for in every way Assumption Church has been and continues to be the absolute center of the universe in Polish Black Rock.

It is understandable that in an area dominated by one ethnic group the church came to hold so much power in the neighborhood. This never happened in Black Rock, for there, with several different denominations, the churchgoing population was sufficiently fragmented that it was impossible for any one church to totally dominate. As a result of this fragmentation other institutions - social circles, taverns, athletic clubs, and secret fraternal societies - all functioning in secular ways, brought the people together on non-religious grounds. The churches in Black Rock, even St. Francis, the largest and oldest in the area, did not serve as a catch-all for neighborhood activities. None of the secular groups met here and there is no evidence of priestly participation in the activities of the social groups. Indeed, the names of the priests at St. Francis never appear in the pages of the Gazette and only once in the records of the Black Rock Businessmen's Association.

Had Assumption Parish, like the Polish East Side, been a solid Polish neighborhood from the beginning, the development of the Church as the dominant institution in the neighborhood would be more understandable. Yet, ethnic homogeneity, one must recall, did not exist in Assumption during the early years of Polish settlement here. Thus, in spite of the neighborhood's heterogeneity, a condition which would normally have led to the creation of diverse neighborhood religious institutions, Assumption Church achieved dominance.

Although there can be no doubt but that the traditional explanations for the development of a strong church in immigrant neighborhoods - the perpetuation of old-world village traits, the search for security in

an alien world - do apply here, there are other more telling explanations as to why a Polish ghetto developed which have more to do with the neighborhood already in existence in the older neighborhood of Black Rock. While it is impossible to say for certain whether the original thirty-odd Polish members of St. Francis were asked to leave or whether they did so on their own, it is possible to speculate that had more concessions been made to this group — a Polish assistant might well have been hired, Polish sermons could have been added - they would not have been as eager to form their own congregation. Similarly, had the Americans, Germans, and others chosen not to leave the Parish following the heavy in-migration of Poles, a strictly Polish church life would not have come to dominate the life of that neighborhood. Yet, by the turn of the century Assumption Church had become the center of a whole range of secular activities not found at St. Francis: several needlework clubs, a dramatic society, bowling, baseball and basketball teams, a branch of the Foresters and the Roman Catholic Union, all used the church as a meeting place.[47] Although the construction of the Polish Cadets Hall at Grant and Amherst in 1913 led many of these social groups to meet here, the church continued to play the dominant role in the organization of these activities as participation in them was restricted to members in good standing in the church, yearly communion being a prerequisite.[48]

Neighborhood exclusiveness was not restricted to St. Francis Xavier. It is conceivable that in the wake of the Polish migration the already established neighborhood organizations in Black Rock might well have reorganized so as to include the newly arrived Poles across the tracks. The tracks themselves, although they crossed at grade level, were not insurmountable for not only had several Black Rock merchants

crossed them to open commercial outlets here, but the many non-Poles of the Parish, seventy-five percent of the neighborhood in 1905, crossed them regularly in order to participate in Black Rock's community activities. Yet there is no record that the Black Rock Businessmen's Association ever even considered extending their boundaries eastward. Indeed, it was not until the late 1920's that there was ever any participation by any one from Assumption Parish on the boards of neither St. Francis, the Businessmen's nor the Savings and Loan Association. Nor was there any effort made to open the many secret orders and societies that existed in Black Rock to the residents of Assumption. Had any of these moves toward inter-neighborhood unity been made it is doubtful that the non-Poles would have left a vacuum in which a strictly Polish neighborhood network was able to develop in Assumption.

The most important factor then, in the development of Assumption as an all Polish neighborhood was the exodus from the area of a majority of non-Poles during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century. Because these people had been excluded from the strictly parochial activities of the Poles and because they played only a peripheral role in the life of the Black Rock community, the non-Poles of Assumption, caught between two intensely organized neighborhoods, were people without a neighborhood. As a result they developed no binding ties to either place and although many remained in Assumption for upwards of twenty years, the existence of seven rooming houses catering only to American and German boarders, suggests that these people regarded Assumption as merely a temporary stopping place on the way to a more permanent neighborhood.[49] And indeed, by 1915 most of the non-Poles of the Parish had moved out.

The exodus of non-Poles from Assumption during the second decade

of the twentieth century constituted a major upheaval in the life of all three neighborhoods in northwestern Buffalo. The migration affected all nationality groups except the Hungarians, and every occupational group as well. In order to determine who left Assumption Parish between 1905 and 1915, a sample of each non-Polish group, representing the full range of occupational levels on each street in the Parish, was taken. These people were then traced to their place of residence as listed in the City Directory of 1915. The result is a startling story of neighborhood desertion:

CHART VII

MOBILITY OF OCCUPATION GROUPS BY NATIONALITY
OUT OF ASSUMPTION PARISH, 1905-1915*

Occupation	Same	Black Rock	Riverside	Other	No listing
Day Laborers					
U.S. (71)	13	17	6	3	32
German (67)	17	18	-	1	31
English (9)	-	2	-	1	6
Irish (19)	2	1	1	-	15
Canadian (21)	4	-	-	-	17
Swedes (7)	1	-	1	-	5
Businessmen					
U.S. (39)	32	1	3	3	-
German (26)	25	1	-	-	-
Foundry Workers					
U.S. (59)	20	24	17	4	4
German (54)	20	24	3	-	7
English (5)	-	1	2	1	1
Irish (9)	2	2	1	-	4
Canadian (10)	4	2	-	-	5
Swedes (4)	2	-	-	2	-
Skilled Workers					
U.S. (65)	9	13	40	1	2
German (50)	16	25	8	-	1
English (7)	-	-	6	-	1
Irish (9)	3	1	3	-	2
Canadian (8)	1	-	1	-	6
Swedes (3)	1	-	-	2	-

*Sources: New York State Manuscript Census, 1915 and the Buffalo City Directory, 1915.

It is immediately apparent that the poorest as well as the more successful of the non-Poles chose to leave Assumption during this ten year period. First there were the day laborers. Because of the transient nature of their lot, the great percentage of them do not appear in the Directory. However, some conclusions can be drawn from those who were listed in that year. One fact stands out: the greatest number of even this poorest segment of the population of the Parish was leaving, primarily for Black Rock. Riverside was clearly out of the reach of these people as only eight of a total of 205 laborers in the sample were able to move here.

Of all the groups in the sample, the businessmen in the Parish, all of whom were American and German, were most reluctant to move. And while they appeared to play no role in the governance of neighborhood life, all but eight in the 1905 sample of sixty-five stayed in the Parish to reap the profits that a growing Polish population would bring.

Between the economically insecure day laborers and the more secure skilled workers, were the foundry workers, the men who worked as coremakers, moulders, and coopers in the factories of the area. Unlike the day laborers, 50% of whom were unlisted in the 1915 Directory, only 14% of the foundry workers did not appear in that listing. While many of these men did remain in Assumption, the greatest number of them chose to leave, the American among them to Riverside and Black Rock, the Germans primarily to Black Rock.

Of the skilled workers, only 10% were not listed in the 1915 Directory. Financially better off than the day laborers and the foundry workers, these men left Assumption in droves. By 1915 approximately 60% of the American-born skilled workers had moved to Riverside while 20% had moved to Black Rock. The German-born skilled workers were also able

to move out of the Parish, 50% going to Black Rock and slightly less than 10% to Riverside.

That most of the non-Poles in Assumption in 1905, regardless of their nationality or their occupation chose to leave can best be seen in Chart VIII:

CHART VIII

Nationality	% leaving	% to Black Rock	% to Riverside	% to other
U. S.	60%	23%	32%	5%
German	50%	40%	10%	
Irish	66%	43%	23%	
English	99%	40%	36%	17%
Canadians*				
Swedes	66%	6%	60%	

* According to Stephen Gredel of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society and an expert on local immigration, many of the Canadians who came to Buffalo did so in search of temporary employment and often returned home after a short stay here. This accounts for the large percentage of Canadians who were recorded in the Census of 1905 but were not listed in the City Directory of 1915.

What these two charts tell us is that as the Poles were pouring into Assumption Parish during the early years of the twentieth century, those Western Europeans and Americans who had been in the area since the end of the nineteenth century were leaving at an incredibly rapid rate. Thus, the American-born residents, 26% of the Parish's population in 1905, had declined to only 8% in 1915 while the German born and their children, 22% of the population in 1905, had declined to 7% ten years later. And as they left, the Polish population climbed steadily from 33% in 1905 to 75% ten years later as the other groups meanwhile came to constitute 1% or less of the total population.

By 1915 assumption had become a 90% Polish city

Thus, the up-rootedness of the non-Poles and their readiness to leave the Parish in the wake of Polish immigration was a direct result of the neighborhood structure of Black Rock, which because of its local

orientation was unable and unwilling to respond to changes in the adjoining area. Yet as much as the institutional insularity of Black Rock was a factor, the people themselves never showed any interest in welcoming the residents of Assumption into their community. This exclusiveness is most clearly seen in the position of the Black Rock Businessmen's Association and the International Gazette in the matter of the grade crossings.

Ever since 1836 when the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Railroad first passed through Black Rock, there had been grade-level crossings in the neighborhood. However, it was not until the 1870's and 1880's with the development of the Amherst-Tonawanda axis as an extensive railroad crossing, that it became a problem. At the same time, political and business groups in downtown Buffalo were giving their full support to the work of the Grade Crossing Commission, created by the State Legislature in 1888, and throughout the next decade their work proceeded steadily.[50] In 1896 the first viaduct was completed on Michigan Avenue over the New York Central Railroad line, while other followed in the late 1890's and early years of the twentieth century. By 1905, R. B. Adam, a former member of the Commission, reported that most all of the work had been done and in a long paper listing the completed work, concluded that with but few exceptions, grade crossings were no longer a problem for Buffalo.[51]

Meanwhile, there had been no work done on the massive, nine-line crossing at Amherst and Tonawanda. As early as 1886 Tovey had criticized the crossing as being even more dangerous than the trolley and the Association was sufficiently concerned about it that one of its first committees was dedicated to the eradication of all grade crossings in Black Rock.[52] Thus, they were hopeful when the Grade Crossing Commission was formed. As Tovey wrote: "The passage of the Grade Crossing bill

offers hope that the people of Black Rock may soon find relief from the deadly grade crossing at Amherst and Tonawanda."[53]

Yet, by 1889 the grade crossing had ceased to be a local issue. Gone were Tovey's passionate editorials remonstrating the Commission for the slowness of their work. Gone too was the Association's Grade Crossing Committee which in late 1889 had ceased to meet, and in the absence of public pressure, the crossing was not eliminated as its absence from Adam's 1905 report confirms.

The sudden silence of these neighborhood leaders, many of whom were actively seeking to eliminate any and all obstacles impeding Black Rock's access to downtown Buffalo, suggests that the perpetuation of the grade crossing had become an important feature of their perception of the neighborhood. Indeed, it had served as a boundary not only for the Association but for the Gazette as well which, as we have already seen, was not sold east of the tracks. Thus, there is more than coincidence in the fact that 1889, the last year that grade crossings were mentioned as an issue by the Association or the Gazette, followed by one year the formation of Assumption Parish. For, as Black Rock's attitudes toward Assumption clearly demonstrate, the leaders of Black Rock were only too pleased to have their negative ideas reinforced by the existence of what must have been an awesome physical barrier. By the turn of the century then, this barrier had become a major component of Black Rock's neighborhood image.

Thus, it was the unwillingness of the people of Black Rock to open up their community to the people of Assumption, Poles and non-Poles alike, that helped to shape the structure and character of the neighborhood. For just as the non-Poles of the area might not have left had they become more apart of the fibre of Black Rock's community, Assumption

Parish would not have developed as a Polish ghetto had the response of Black Rock been different. Yet, at this stage in its development as a neighborhood, Black Rock was simply not willing to broaden its definition of the neighborhood. As a result strictly Polish institutions: the Church, the Polish Cadets, and Polish fraternal societies, came to dominate neighborhood life in the Parish while the rejection of the Parish by Black Rock only made it easier for the Poles to justify the preservation of their introverted old-world traits. The result was they built a community every bit as tightly knit and parochial as was Black Rock.

Yet, there is an important difference in quality and kind between these two neighborhoods, for while the strong sense of neighborhood in Assumption was rooted in indigenous ethnic homogeneity and magnified peasant traits, in Black Rock, where by 1905 the great majority of the population were native Americans and first and second generation children of immigrants, the sense of community had been acquired and formed by the neighborhood's awareness of its own separate history, by its sharp perception of its relationship to the rest of the city, and now by the growth of a large and alien neighborhood on the other side of the tracks.

Thus, Assumption Parish, although ignored by the people and institutions of Black Rock, did have a strong impact on that older neighborhood. Because of Assumption's large, Proletariat, Polish population, the parish was less modern and less a part of the fabric of metropolitan life than was Black Rock. This factor which acted to diminish the inferiority complex which had earlier motivated Black Rock's business leadership and would enable them to follow a different course following their reorganization in 1905. At the same time the growth of this new

and alien neighborhood to the east, a neighborhood so well organized in its own right that it placed no demands on the neighborhood structure of Black Rock, served to reinforce the inherent and introverted tendencies long present in Black Rock. Black Rock's relationship with Riverside, however, was different and throughout the years during which the people of Assumption were ignored, there was intimate contact and interaction between Black Rock and the new residential suburb known as Riverside. However, before we investigate Black Rock's relationship with Riverside, we will examine how Black Rock's increasing localism, reinforced by the growth of Assumption Parish, led neighborhood leaders to pursue totally different goals than those which had motivated them earlier.

CHAPTER VI

HOW THE CONCERNS OF THE BLACK ROCK BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION FOLLOWING ITS REORGANIZATION IN 1905 REFLECT NEW AND DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

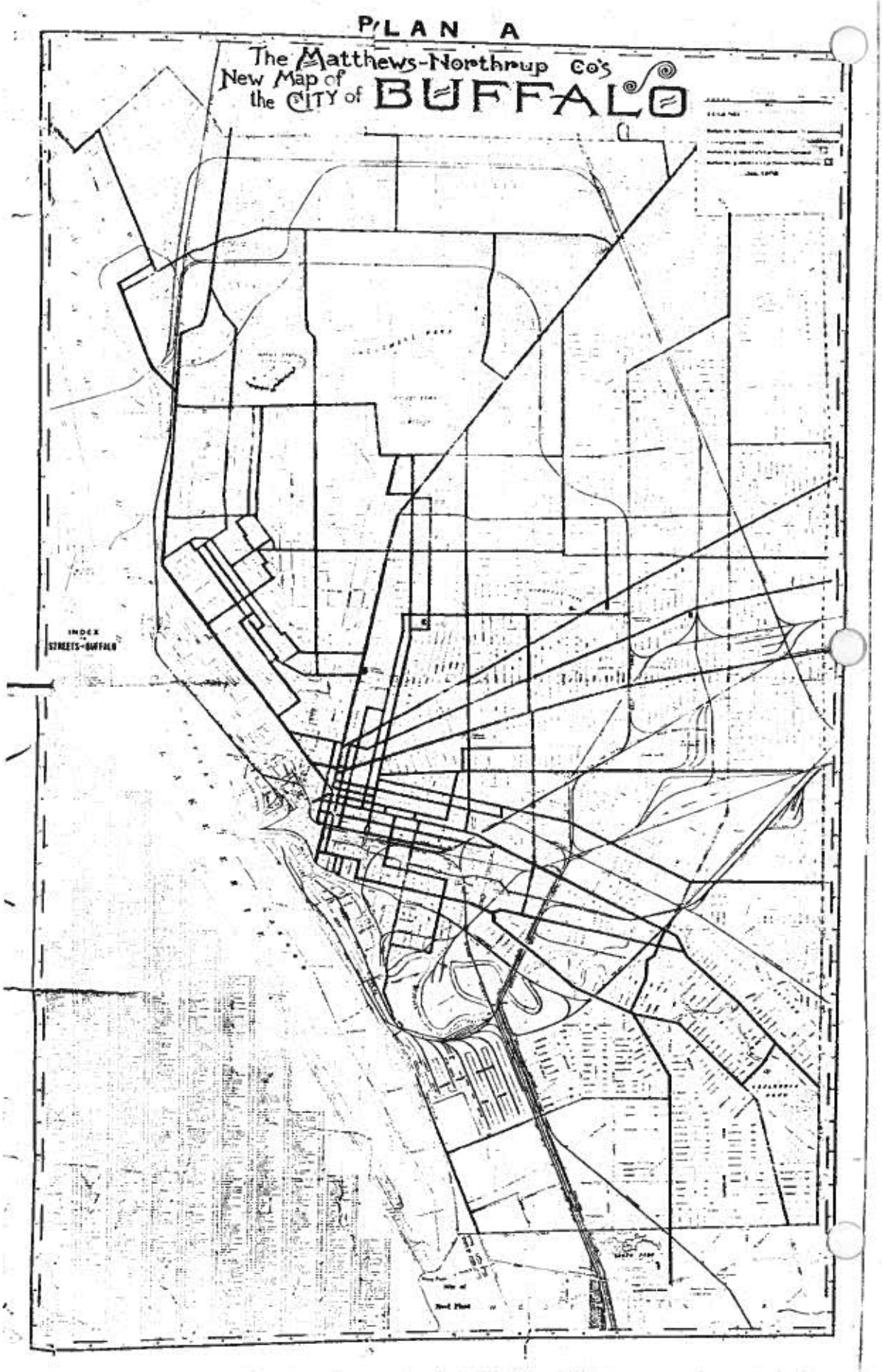
The attitudinal changes which characterized the Businessmen's Association following their reorganization in 1905 are problemmatical because, as we have seen, they cannot be attributed to any substantial change in the neighborhood itself. Nor was there any change in the leadership of the Association which, with the exception of Conrad May, an American-born proprietor of a Niagara Street clothing store, was exactly the same as it had been at the time of its adjournment in 1900.[1] What had changed, however, was the Association's perceptions of the metropolis and their realization that their earlier aspirations - the trappings of urban progress and modernity which they had once coveted - could not be attained without jeopardizing that which over the years had come to exert the greatest force in Black Rock: the strength and integrity of the neighborhood community. Yet the actual expansion of the metropolis and the increasing dominance of downtown had wreaked havoc with their expectations as ever greater inroads were being made into what Wiebe would call the "island community" of Black Rock.

The vital small-store economy of the neighborhood not withstanding, the industrialization of Black Rock had tied the economic fate of the community inextricably to the economy of downtown. Similarly, the advent of at-large representation in 1892 had weakened considerably

the strength of the neighborhood so that politically Black Rock had become increasingly at the mercy of outside forces. The two adjoining maps reveal a great deal about the relationship between outlying neighborhoods and the downtown business district in turn-of-the-century Buffalo. As the map of the streetcar system in 1902 shows, by minimizing the distance that had once served to reinforce neighborhood separatism, the city's well-integrated intra-urban transportation network had linked these insular enclaves into a metropolitan whole. And the centripetal direction of the arrows in Ullbrich's Book Store's map of Buffalo was riveted downtown. Originating as far away as Tonawanda and Kenmore, the arrows of downtown's dominance, mindless of the historic distinctions of separate neighborhoods which lie in their way, converge downtown and with them much of the history of the late nineteenth century city falls into place. For both these maps reveal clearly a major phenomenon of these years: the erosion of the separate neighborhood enclaves and the total domination, in fact as well as in image, of the metropolitan area by the city's downtown business core. It was this factor of modern urban life which more than anything else was responsible for the change of direction that characterized the Black Rock Businessmen's Association during the twentieth century and their new understanding of the neighborhood and its place within the framework of metropolitan Buffalo.

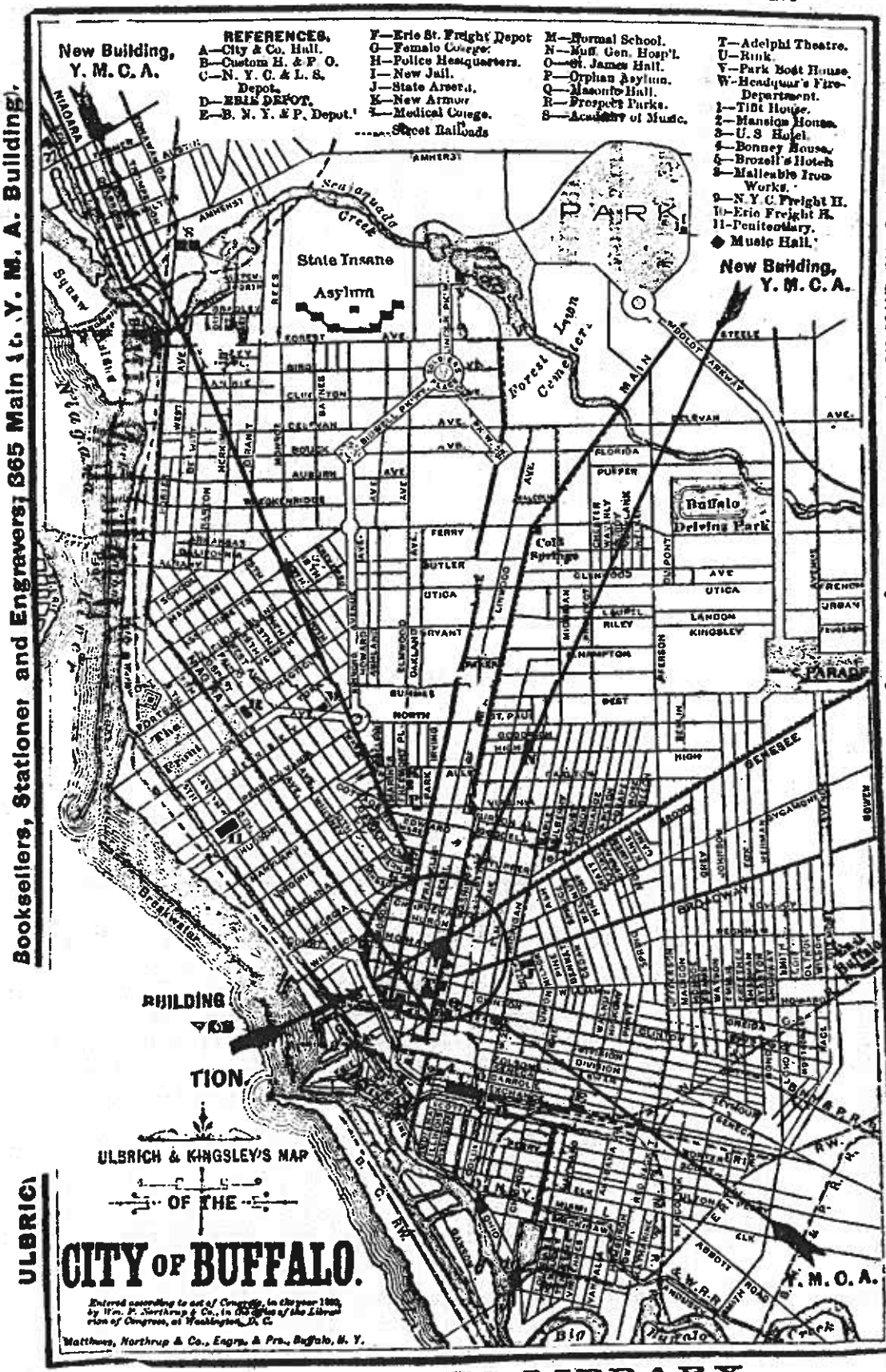
Disillusionment with their earlier course of action was evident in everyone of the decisions the Association made after 1905. Like other nineteenth century American advocates of growth and development chastened by their ambitions - "community boosters who had courted a factory for years could suddenly find it a tyrant and turn against it"[2] - the Association now took steps to correct a posture which had violated the scene and

MAP III


PLAN A
The Matthews-Northrup Co's
New Map of
the CITY of BUFFALO
INDEX
STREETS-BUFFALO

MAP IV

WEDDING AND CARD ENGRAVING.



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structure of their community. Their first action in this direction was a new found concern for the problems of the small neighborhood businessman and at their first meeting in January, 1905 they formed a "Committee for Black Rock Business" headed by George Ailinger, a Niagara Street grocer.[3] During their early days the Association had expended considerable energy on wooing heavy industry. In 1888 they had formed a "Committee on Industrial Development" whose main function was to encourage the relocation of factories in Black Rock. And just as the Association had been unwilling to ruffle the feathers of those other symbols of urban progress - the railroads and streetcars - they had in 1892 supported the Common Council's repeal of a smoke emission ordinance on the grounds that it "hindered the location of manufactories in the City."[4] But more important than the concern for the small businessmen of the neighborhood which their new committee demonstrates, was the subtle yet important departure from the earlier held understanding of the role of the neighborhood in its relationship with downtown Buffalo. For if the earlier efforts of the Association had been geared toward bridging the gap between Black Rock and downtown Buffalo, toward minimizing the differences between neighborhood and metropolis, the purpose of the Committee on Black Rock Business was to strengthen the neighborhood as a business center. This was apparent during the Christmas season of 1905 when the Association began what was to become an annual campaign to induce local residents to do their Christmas shopping in the neighborhood. In an advertisement in the Gazette the Association implored: "Past experiences recall that you can do as well in the community store as downtown or elsewhere. . . Give your neighborhood merchant a break this Xmas and you will find that you will be helping yourself as well as him."[5] A similar ad appeared a week

later: "Black Rock is well equipped with stores and with all manner of business establishments and the buyers of this section will serve their own conveniences as well as contributing to the upbuilding of the community by trading in their own neighborhood stores."[6] The Association did more than run ads on behalf of local merchants. Deploring the number of delivery vans from downtown stores in the streets of Black Rock, they charged the Committee on Black Rock Business with the responsibility of going door-to-door spreading the virtues of local stores.[7]

During the 1890's it had been Alfred Tovey of the International Gazette whose greater sensitivity to the neighboring tendencies of Black Rock had led him to criticize the metropolitanizing schemes of the Association. Not only had he opposed the streetcars as unnecessary intrusions on the neighborhood, but he alone had been outspoken in demanding that Porter Square be returned to the people as a public park. Similarly, he had been the lone proponent of a public market for Black Rock. Since the late 1880's there had been talk in the Gazette of a city-financed public market in Black Rock similar to those on Washington Street and on Broadway. In an editorial in 1892 Tovey reported that many years earlier an anonymous "local philanthropist" had willed land on both sides of Amherst Street between Niagara and Dearborn streets to be used as a public market. Demanding that it now be put to its designated purpose, Tovey wrote: "Our population is composed largely of the class of people who work for a living and when they can save money and time by going to a local market near at hand, it is a great blessing to them."[8] Yet, involved as it was in projects designed to achieve the greater integration of the neighborhood in the workings of the city, the Association would have no part of the plan and the issue never got beyond the

pages of Tovey's paper. However, on this issue, too, the Association had undergone a change in its thinking and in 1907 John Esser, the president of the Association at the time of Tovey's original suggestion and now one of its vice-presidents, was placed in charge of the "Committee for a Public Market."[9] That the market was not built until 1915 does not detract from the important fact that the Association's advocacy of it, like their new found interest in local business, represented still another attempt to bolster and reinforce the local community.

At the same time that the Association was becoming more responsive to the needs of the local merchant, it also showed a greater awareness of the working-class nature of the neighborhood's population and for the first time began to address themselves to the problems of this segment of the population. Although Black Rock had been composed primarily of unskilled and semi-skilled workers - the coremakers and iron moulders in the local foundries, the carpenters, painters, and plumbers, the motormen and conductors on the streetcar line - these people had never been included in the Association's perception of the neighborhood. And because of the absence of labor unions in the neighborhood - the Iron Moulders had opened a Black Rock branch in 1895 but by 1905 it had less than one hundred members[10] - the working people of the neighborhood were without an official spokesman of their own. While the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association and St. Francis Church both had working-people on their boards, the Businessmen's Association, perhaps eager to project a more prosperous and sophisticated neighborhood image, had all but ignored these people during the early days of their neighborhood activity. Indeed, the aspirations of the Association had little tangible relevence to the needs of the average working man. Certainly, they had little actual use for streetcars and arterial connections when

the great majority of Black Rockites found both employment and recreation within walking distance of their homes. And while the working man may well have been proud to have had the Pan American Exposition located in Riverside Park, the Association's pampering of suburban Riverside and their willingness to trade-away the power of the local alderman by their espousal of the Charter of 1892, could only have alienated the Association in the eyes of the local working class.

Thus, while the Association ignored them, Tovey alone dealt with the problems of Black Rock's working population. From the time of its inception in 1886 Tovey's Gazette had featured periodic editorials championing the cause of the skilled and unskilled worker. An early editorial called for the construction of homes to be sold at no more than one thousand dollars "for the growing working-class population of Black Rock." Tovey even suggested a design for such a home: it was to be standardized at 16 x 24 and 14 feet high, with three rooms downstairs and three upstairs. With an "extension kitchen and an attached woodshed you would have a very comfortable dwelling for the low salaried working man."[11] Similarly, the Gazette supported every effort of the working-man to improve his lot. This was particularly true during the occassional strike which hit the area. While the Association was silent during a city-wide railroad strike in 1893, (remember their reluctance to challenge the Grand Trunk Railroad during the Porter Square Case) the Gazette took the opportunity to publicize the demands of the strikers. When the militia was called out to break the tie-up at the downtown terminal, the Gazette went beyond the boundaries of its own neighborhood and protested that "it is a tragedy that the difficulty could not have been settled without having to call out the militia."[12] And when in 1894 the workers at Pratt and Letchworth received word that they were to receive a 25% cut in

weekly wages and refused to work, the Gazette reported that "Like spirited and intelligent men they struck." Calling attention to the danger of the work - "several of the men have lost hands and fingers and were obliged to lay off and pay for surgical care" - the paper demanded a restoration of pay cuts.[13]

Similarly, while the Association was busy polishing the progressive image of Black Rock Tovey was calling attention to the unemployment and poverty which existed in the neighborhood. Equally as important for what it tells us about his vision of the neighborhood, Tovey unlike the members of the Association, had no qualms about depicting Black Rock as a working-class neighborhood. In 1888, two years after he had begun publication, Tovey wrote that if the number of unemployed were calculated "the sum total would astonish us."[14] Perhaps referring to the lack of concern displayed by the Association, the Gazette noted sarcastically that "difficult conditions exist for the working population of Black Rock although it is kept hid [sic] while others carelessly spend every cent they have."[15]

It was clear that neighborhood poverty was not a product of Tovey's imagination in spite of the fact that the Association did not choose to recognize it. In 1896 three of the Protestant churches in Black Rock took part in the Church District Plan organized by the Charity Organization Society of Buffalo.[16] And while these churches were willing to make a committment to the poor of the neighborhood - "to fill a special responsibility for the moral, social and economic elevation of the district"[17] - the Association was unmoved.

It was not until their reorganization in 1905 that the Black Rock Businessmen's Association altered their conception of the neighborhood so as to include working-class people within it and to express

concern for the problems of the working man and the poor. In June of 1905, six months after their first meeting since 1900, the Association heard a speech by one J. J. Anderson of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners who was trying to organize a local in Black Rock. At this meeting Anderson pointed out that the average wage of local carpenters and joiners was $1.50 per day and he proceeded to outline an unemployment and sick benefit program which would be available to his membership. Although the Association was not asked to support the program, the fact that the union organizer even appeared at the meeting suggests a major departure from their earlier apathy towards the problems of labor.[18]

While the Association could take few tangible steps to improve the actual conditions of the working-man, considering that as small businessmen and store owners the members employed few people, their frame of reference toward area laborers altered considerably and they became increasingly more involved in the affairs of this segment of the community. In 1906, for the first time in the history of the Association, they took part in the city's labor day parade.[19] Later in 1906 they passed two resolutions which demonstrated their symbolic solidarity with labor. In November they warned their own Committee on Balls and Parties "that it is absolutely necessary to have union printing and union music" at any of the group's affairs.[20] Several weeks later they made another gesture on behalf of the working people of Black Rock and passed a resolution which they sent to the Commissioner of Public Works demanding that only local labor be used on all city-financed work in the neighborhood.[21]

As their attitude towards the workingman changed so,too, did their thinking about poverty in the neighborhood. As the cold began to settle into the area in December of 1905, a delegation from the Association

called on all the local coal dealers to induce them to furnish coke to the "poor of this section" at cost.[22] At the same meeting the Association formed the "Charity Committee" whose function was to formulate a program of charitable work for Black Rock's needy. In January, 1906 the Committee reported that they had worked out a plan with local schools to sponsor a program whereby every student would contribute twenty-five cents and whatever old clothes he may have to be distributed by the Association as it saw fit.[23] Later in the year the Committee, under John Esser, visited the Charity Organization Society of Buffalo's headquarters on Church Street to protest against the policy which denied aid to families in which the father was a drunk. Arguing that the child cannot be blamed for the sins of his father, Esser urged the continuation of aid regardless of the condition of the father.[24]

That the Association's new direction resulted in an unprecedented involvement in the daily affairs of the residents of the neighborhood is apparent in the plan devised by Esser's Committee dealing with local medical costs. According to it a fund was created which would pay the fees of local doctors who were willing to serve the needy at a prearranged scale of reduced fees.[25] Although there is no record of the success of this plan, it, like the other programs devised by the Association, represented an important shift in its attitudes about the neighborhood and was still another indication that they were willing to recognize and to attempt to deal with the problems of what was in fact a working-class section of the city.

Most revealing of their changed attitudes toward neighborhood is the Association's relationship with the schools of the area. In 1886, the year the Association was founded, the only public school in Black Rock was Public School 20 at Amherst and East Street.[26] As the only school

north of the Scajaquada Creek on the west side of the city, Public School 20 was not a neighborhood school but rather a catchall serving the children of Riverside and Assumption as well. But by the late 1880's and early 1890's new schools were built: Public School 42 on Clay, Public School 54 on Hertel and Guernsey, and Public School 60 on Ontario Street in Riverside. The formation of new school districts tended to emphasize still more the localistic forces already at work in Public School 20 due to the persistence of teachers here. The Association's realization of the strictly neighborhood aspect of the school resulted in a qualitative change in its attitude towards it.

During its first fourteen years of its existence, the Association's main interest in Public School 20 was overcrowding. In order to deal with the problem, the Businessmen had created a School Committee under Peter Glor, an Amherst Street cooper, who during the 1890's had written several letters to the Gazette and local aldermen detailing the overcrowded conditions which prevailed in the school. Conditions were apparently so bad that in 1890 the Board of Education was forced to open an annex between two saloons on Niagara Street.[27] It was this situation which had led the Association to urge their aldermen to fight for the construction of new schools, and the opening of Public School 42 in 1889, and Public School 54 brought praise from the Gazette: "The diligent efforts of the Black Rock Businessmen's Association and their School Committee have worked to the advantage of Black Rockers long frustrated by the scarcity of school rooms. Public School 52 is a welcome addition to our section of the city."[28] The construction of Public School 60 in 1893 took still further pressure off Public School 20 and the Association was satisfied that it would bring "adequate relief to the crowded conditions which exist in our local school."[29]

Although their concern for overcrowding was genuine, their solutions to the problem were symptomatic of the Association's image-building activities of the 1890's; for like its support of the arterials, the streetcar and the Pan-Am Exposition, it appeared that the Association was interested in the schools more for the effect that new and modern schools would have on the image of the neighborhood than in the problems of the school children themselves. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Association's unsuccessful effort in 1899 to have a new high school built in Black Rock. In that year the Superintendent of Education announced that the Board of Education was planning to build a new high school somewhere on the West side of Buffalo.[30] The possibility that Black Rock might be the recipient of this plum was too great a temptation for the Association to bypass, and in a campaign reminiscent of the one waged that same year to have the Exposition held in Riverside Park, they lobbied for the selection of a site on Niagara Street between Amherst and Austin Streets in the heart of the neighborhood. Arguing that this site was equally accessible to people on both sides of the Creek, the Association sent three delegates to meet with the Superintendent.[31] However, he had already made up his mind and when he announced that Lafayette High School was to be located at Lafayette and Baynes, the Association was outraged. Commenting bitterly that "Black Rock has certainly not been treated fairly in this matter," Richard Humphrey, the President of the Association vowed to continue his efforts to secure a high school in the neighborhood.[32]

However, following their reorganization, the Association's understanding about schools and education in general, became more complex. One indication of the importance with which they regarded the problem is that Humphrey, the president of the Association in 1905, was chosen the

chairman of the School Committee, and it was Humphrey who was the pivotal figure in all of the Association's school decisions in the years following reorganization. The first action of Humphrey's committee came in 1906 when he demanded that the night school at Public School 20 be expanded to include vocational training in addition to the courses in basic academic skills. It was to be expected that as the Association became more oriented towards the working-class population of the neighborhood, that it would give more attention to the night school and to vocational education programs. Between 1906 and 1909 Humphrey had several meetings with the Superintendent of Schools in an effort to develop a full-fledged vocational curriculum at Public School 20.[33] Humphrey's work finally materialized when in 1909 the Board of Education announced the opening of Black Rock Vocational School, adjacent to Public School 20 on East Street. The school was everything that Humphrey's Committee had asked for. Its curriculum offered courses in reading, writing and spoken English for the foreign born; a business course including bookkeeping, typing, stenography; a class which prepared women in sewing, dressmaking, and millinery; courses in moulding, pattern-making, wood-turning, joinery, and machine shop practice.[34] The Association continued to play an active role in the night school (later to become McKinley Vocational) through Richard Humphrey who was made ex-officio president as a token of gratitude for his work on the school's behalf.[35]

It was during this period that the Association began to take an on-going and vital interest in the affairs of Public School 20. Occasionally a delegation from the Association visited the school, lunched with the principal and teachers in the school cafeteria and toured the facility. In 1907 the Association began their sponsorship

of annual citizenship awards and the awarding of prizes for primary and secondary school students who excelled in their studies and conduct.[36] They also initiated another tradition which has lasted into the present: an annual address by the principal of Public School 20 to the Businessmen. The purpose of the address was to report on school events in general: new programs, the plans of the dramatic club and the athletic teams, and the announcing of prize winning pupils. There was more to this than a mere interest in the day-to-day workings of the school. For unlike the early days when the Association had been interested solely in the problems of overcrowding, their attention now focused on the kind of education and training the children of the neighborhood were receiving. Never before had they been so involved with questions of curriculum planning. Nor had they taken time to visit the school or to invite the principal to visit with them. This change suggests a subtle yet critically important shift in their formulation of neighborhood priorities. For during the 1890's when the Association measured the success of the neighborhood in terms of visible, physical improvements, their only perceptions about education dealt with the physical plant. Their new found concern with the quality and kind of education their children received reveals the extent to which their thinking about the neighborhood had changed.

In addition to these new and different expressions of concern, the Association now assumed the responsibility for the moral character and the behaviour of the children of the neighborhood. In March, 1905, three months after their reorganization, the Association formed the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Truancy "to consider the proper disposition and care of wayward juveniles in Black Rock."[37] Again it was Richard Humphrey who was made the Committee's chairman. The following

December Humphrey made his report to the Association: "We have found that several parts of Black Rock are infested with gangs of boys, many of them under the age of fourteen, who cause great annoyance to the people by their petty thefts, their wanton destruction of property, their use of the most vile and obscene language in the public streets to such an extent that some places are almost impassable for ladies. The result is that the police station is flooded with the complaints of the long suffering public and the police and justices are blamed for a state of things which under present conditions they are in no wise responsible and powerless to prevent." Humphrey noted that there had been talk that the City should open and operate an institution "for the proper detention and care of juvenile delinquents and truants," but he rejected this idea as a "denial of the inherent privileges of the family and the close-to-home institutions to do what they deem best for their children."[38] This last point is crucial in understanding the role Humphrey was assigning to the neighborhood for not only does it show him to be skeptical about the ability of outside institutions to solve the problems of the neighborhood, but also indicates how all-encompassing a role in the life of the community he expected neighborhood institutions - the family, the church, the school, and even the Black Rock Businessmen's Association - to play. While his report does not begin even to try to understand the causes behind what was apparently not an undue amount of delinquency,[39] it does show that he expected that the solutions for it were to be found in the neighborhood.

While this was most certainly a reaction to their new perception of the expanding metropolis as a threat, their new attitudes must also be seen as a positive attempt to fortify a way of life which gave meaning and strength to their lives in the twentieth century city. The depth of

their neighborhood ideology and orientation became still more obvious when the people of Black Rock attempt to export it to suburban Riverside.

CHAPTER VII

BLACK ROCK AND RIVERSIDE: THE SUBURBAN IDEAL AS AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT OF BLACK ROCK'S CONSCIOUSNESS AS A NEIGHBORHOOD

Since their founding in 1886 the Black Rock Businessmen's Association had gone through an important change in their understanding of the neighborhood and its relationship to downtown Buffalo. As we have seen their original perception of Black Rock as a backwater of the modern and progressive city had led them to project the neighborhood as a place only too eager to join the mainstream of modern urban life. However, the changes brought about by the rapid pace of urbanization during the last years of the nineteenth century had altered their thinking so that they had come to a final understanding of Black Rock as a real neighborhood community, deeply rooted in people's lives and activities, the most positive and compelling aspect of their lives in the city. Throughout these changing perceptions of the neighborhood, the spokesmen of Black Rock had remained consistent and persistent in their attitude toward Riverside. Their hopes for the area, their efforts to protect and preserve its suburban calm, are important aspects of Black Rock's self-image as a neighborhood and of its attitudes toward the changes wrought by the growth of the city in the early years of the twentieth century.

Above all, Riverside was different from Black Rock. Bounded by the Niagara River in the west, the City Line in the north, Tonawanda Street in the east and Hertel Avenue on the south, Riverside had originally

been a part of the Village of Black Rock. However, due to its location considerably to the north of the more extensive areas of the Village at Ferry Street and the node of activity at Niagara and Amherst streets, Riverside was populated considerably later and assumed a different form and function than the other sections of the former village.

In 1874 when Black Rock was already a well-developed neighborhood with a population of approximately 2,200 people, Riverside, more commonly known as North Buffalo, was still a largely unimproved outpost of the city. Large tracts of vacant land were in the hands of several individuals.[1] William Bird, the president of the Erie County Savings Bank and a resident of Delaware Avenue, owned a large farm between Hertel Avenue (then known as Bird) and the dirt-covered Ontario Street, his summer residence since 1836.[2] Only three streets had been surveyed - Niagara, Ontario, and Tonawanda - with only a small number of scattered homes along these streets, representing a total population of no more than 250 people.[3]

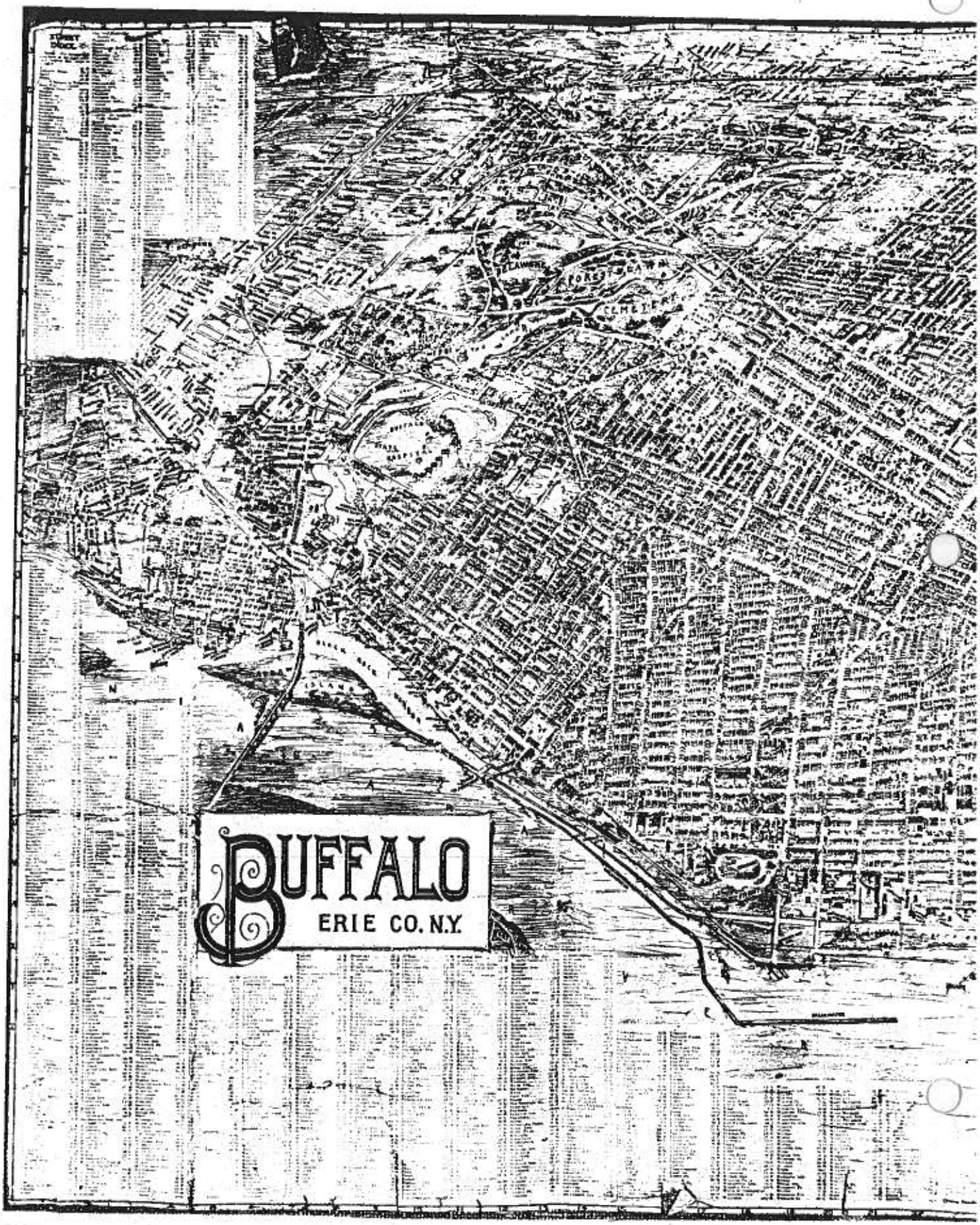
The economic upheavals which had so transformed Black Rock during the 1870's and 1880's had had no apparent impact on Riverside. In 1886, the year which signalled the awakening of Black Rock's consciousness as a neighborhood, Riverside was much the same as it had always been. Although there had been a slight population increase to approximately 350 people, there were no new streets in the area.[4] Riverside's undeveloped and almost rural quality was captured in an advertisement in the International Gazette for the only general store in the area touting its "splendid location commanding a great portion of the farmer's trade in the vicinity."[5]

It was the passage of the Hertel Avenue Sewer Bill in 1888, a measure strongly supported by both the Gazette and the Association, which

assured the growth of Riverside and during the next several years there were a considerable number of real estate transactions in the area. In early 1888 the Bird Family divided its farm into building lots and several Black Rock real estate agents began to take an active interest in residential property here.[6] In 1890 the North Park Land Company composed of three members of the Association bought twenty-nine acres of land near Germania Park (changed to Riverside Park in the early twentieth century) with the purpose of dividing and selling land to perspective homeowners.[7] These events, in addition to the many other transactions between downtown real estate agents and incoming residents recorded in the real estate column of the Gazette, resulted in a steady increase in Riverside's population. With no apparent conflict with their other constituents in Black Rock or Assumption, local aldermen throughout the 1890's secured legislation providing for the paving of streets, the installation of sewers and electric lights and the paving of new streets.[8] While the absence of a church suggests a still incomplete community structure, by 1893 a public school had been built on Ontario Street for the approximately 1,300 people who had come to Riverside in search of a new and different environment.[9]

The difference between Riverside and Black Rock were immediately apparent in the developing street pattern of the new area. It can be seen in the accompanying bird's-eye map of the area made in 1902 that physically Black Rock was hemmed in on all sides between the natural boundary of the River in the west and the man-made boundary of the railroad tracks in the east at Tonawanda Street. The limited area of settlement, plus the rigid grid-street pattern in Black Rock, produced a dense and compact settlement. The compactness of this arrangement, similar to Assumption contrasted starkly with the physical lay-out of Riverside

MAP V



For here there were longer streets with far fewer intersections and far less development. Similarly, with the exception of a cluster of industrial development between Rano Street and the railroad, there were no manufactories whatsoever in Riverside. Even the railroad, a major element of Black Rock's self-image, hardly intruded into the suburban calm of Riverside. The massive confluence of railroad tracks on the eastern boundary of Black Rock thinned out considerably as the rails proceeded northward and was hardly visible to those people living in the northwestern sections of Riverside. These factors, in addition to the location of Germania Park, produced a suburban atmosphere here far different from the quality of life in either Assumption Parish or in Black Rock; an atmosphere which the residents of both these places found appealing.

If the long, uninterrupted residential blocks in Riverside were more suburban, a departure from the more old-world and inner-city grid-pattern of highly urbanized neighborhoods like Black Rock and Assumption, the ethnic characteristics of the place also distinguished it from these other neighborhoods. Of approximately 2,600 people who lived in Riverside in 1905, 66% were members of families headed by native Americans. Add to this the fact that 15% of area families were headed by Canadians, 10% by Englishmen, 39% by Irishmen, against only 6% by Germans and the difference between it and Black Rock and Assumption are more obvious still.[10] Yet it was just these differences - Riverside's newness, its sparce settlement, the relative absence of the signs of urbanization - that appealed to the people of Black Rock. Similarly, from their founding in 1886 both the Gazette and the Businessmen's Association (the latter in spite of its self-imposed boundaries) took more than a casual interest in the growth of Riverside and in the years

ahead, by pursuing goals that they would never have considered for their own neighborhood, did what they could to foster and insure the area's development as a residential suburb.

Two incidents, occurring fifteen years apart, are testimony to Black Rock's continuing committment to the preservation of Riverside's suburban ambiance. Unlike Black Rock where the grade-level railroads were an omnipresent feature of neighborhood life, Riverside had enjoyed relative freedom from the intrustion of steam and rails. However, in 1894 the Frontier and Western Railroad announced that it had submitted to the State Public Services Commission a plan calling for the construction of a new railroad to run from the International Bridge, paralleling the New York Central tracks as far north as Arthur Avenue, where it would turn west and proceed directly north to the City Line through the heart of Riverside.[11] In a large black headline never before used by the paper, Tovey denounced the proposal as "an insidious attempt to convert the lovely riverside section into a smoke-filled railroad yard."[12] Meanwhile, the Businessmen's Association was sufficiently alarmed that they called a special meeting to deal specifically with the situation.[13] Noting that it was too late to negotiate directly with the company, and realizing that they had little power anyway to stop the railroad, they decided to go directly to the P.S.C. A three man delegation made up of John Esser, Richard Humphrey, and Henry Guenther, the aforementioned realtor, was dispatched immediately to Albany to urge that the request of the Frontier and Western be denied. Ten days later the Commission acted accordingly.[14]

Far more important than the actual role of the Association in the outcome of this event is the fact that they chose to become involved in the controversy at all. If anything their feelings about the street-

cars and the Porter Square case in their own neighborhood, suggest that they would have favored the advent of the type of growth fostered by yet another rail line. Yet just as diligently as the Businessmen had fought to remake Black Rock in what they perceived to be the image of the modern metropolis, to overcome the characterization of Black Rock as an "outlying area", they now fought to preserve just that quality - suburbanity - in Riverside.

Although the Black Rock Businessmen had changed their ideas about their own neighborhood following their reorganization in 1905, they remained consistently committed to the preservation of suburbia in Riverside. When in 1909 the Stratton Carriage Company, a Buffalo based concern, sought to build a factory on the southeast side of Philadelphia and Ontario streets, the Association protested. By that time several factories had been built in Riverside but they were all located near the railroad tracks in the vicinity of Skillen Street, far from the residential heart of the neighborhood.[15] Although the site was on the side of the street closest the railroad, it was extremely close to the mixed residential and small business neighborhood in the surrounding area. Perceiving a threat to the character of the neighborhood, the Association, along with the newly formed Riverside Businessmen's Association, vowed to oppose the Company. Following a unanimous resolution, a delegation of three men from each of the neighborhood associations along with Alderman George Striker, met with the director of the company on March 11, 1909.[16] To what extent their action swayed the Company is impossible to determine but several weeks later the Stratton Company withdrew their plans. George Gleber, president of the Riverside Businessmen, thanked his colleagues in Black Rock in a letter which indicates that his hopes for the neighborhood were similar to those

of his Black Rock allies: "As a result of your activity on behalf of the people of North Buffalo, our district will be preserved for residential purposes."[17] Alfred Tovey was also pleased with the turn of events which would "permit the beautiful area of Riverside to blossom free of the noise and dirt with which we have become all to familiar of late."[18]

In addition to their shared aspirations for Riverside, the two neighborhoods enjoyed an institutional closeness not true of Black Rock's relationship with Assumption. Indicative of this is the fact that the highly organized religious life of Black Rock which had rejected the Poles of Assumption almost immediately following their arrival here, accepted and welcomed Riverside worshippers from the very beginning. One of the results of this was the slowness with which Riverside developed churches of their own: it was not until 1900 and 1911, respectively, that the first Protestant and Catholic churches were formed here in spite of the fact that the area's population had exceeded two thousand people by the latter year.[19] Similarly, the willingness of Black Rock fraternal and social groups to open their organizations to the people of Riverside discouraged institutional duplication here just as the opposite attitude had encouraged it in Assumption. As a result there were but two secret societies serving the turn-of-the-century population of approximately 1,700.

Even after Riverside had begun to form its own neighborhood organizations the closeness between groups here and in Black Rock continued. The best illustration of this is the use by both neighborhoods of the Unity Temple built on Niagara and Austin streets by the Buffalo Free Masons in 1905. Given its location in the heart of Black Rock the Hall could well have developed as a strictly neighborhood center. However, due to the special relationship that had developed

between Black Rock and Riverside the Temple became the central meeting place of most all of the societies and social clubs then existing in both neighborhoods.[20] While many of these groups for example, - Masons, Foresters, Harugarii - had branches in both sections by this time, the fact that they met in one central location rather than in scattered taverns and halls throughout the area allowed for a degree of inter-neighborhood communication not desired nor possible in Black Rock's relationship with Assumption. Not restricted to church and social activities, it was not surprising when in the early years of the century the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association opened a branch office on Ontario Street and made an increasing number of loans to homeowners in Riverside.[21]

Similarly, the common understanding that characterized the relationship between Black Rock and Riverside resulted in another form of cooperation which did not exist between Black Rock and Assumption. From the very beginning of Polish settlement in the latter there had been groups of Polish merchants active in the social and institutional life of the neighborhood. It had been Polish merchants who had been responsible for the formation of Assumption Church and the Polish Cadets. At no time, however, could they count on the participation or even the interest of the Businessmen of Black Rock. Indeed, it was not until the late 1920's that the minute books of the Association give any indication that similar groups even existed among their Polish neighbors.

Just the opposite was true in Riverside where the Black Rock Businessmen's Association and the International Gazette not only encouraged the formation of a business for the area but participated in its organization. The call for the formation of a Riverside Businessmen's Association came from Alfred Tovey who, as editor of the Gazette, had long been

an advocate of strong neighborhood organization. In an editorial in 1908 he wrote: "The success of the Businessmen of Black Rock is well-known. Their activities on behalf of their section of the city have attracted the attention of men all over the city interested in the well-being of the citizenry. The businessmen of Riverside would be wasting little time in forming an organization of their own."[22] And in spite of their increased involvement with the internal affairs of their own neighborhood, the Black Rock Association decided "to meet with representative from the Riverside business community to discuss the formation of a businessmen's association in that area."[23] In early 1909 the Riverside Businessmen's Association was formed, as much a result of the guidance and interest of their Black Rock counterpart as of their own initiative.[24] The gratitude of the newly-organized Association in Riverside was shown when a year later they requested and received permission to name one of the largest streets in their neighborhood after the founder of the Black Rock Association, John Esser.[25]

How then do we explain the intimate relationship which developed between Black Rock and Riverside, and more importantly for this study, what does this relationship tell us about the ideas the people of Black Rock had about their neighborhood and their lives within it?

It had nothing to do with common heritage for as late as 1915 the great majority of people living in Riverside came not from Black Rock but rather from Assumption Parish where the arrival of Poles in large numbers resulted in an exodus from that area of the non-Polish population, and from other sections of the city.[26] Nor did it have anything to do with proximity per se, for as we have seen it was not until thirty odd years after the formation of Assumption Parish that the leaders of the older neighborhood deigned even to recognize the adjacent community.

What it did have to do with was the pure and simple fact that Riverside was a lightly-settled, strictly residential suburb and Black Rock wanted to keep it that way. From the very first, Black Rock's involvement with Riverside was predicated on the perpetuation of the suburban quality of the area which, in the idyllic words of Alfred Tovey, was "a garden spot whose breeze-swept views of the Niagara River make it a permanent refuge from the toils and burdens of city life."[27] Even Black Rock's name for the area - Riverside - differed from the appelation used by the downtown newspapers and the City Directory. For it was not until the early twentieth century that the downtown media dropped the name "North Buffalo" for "Riverside." This difference in nomeclature is critical if we are to understand the importance of Riverside's suburbanity to Black Rock. For while "North Buffalo" implies a similarity to, an extension of downtown Buffalo, "Riverside" suggests something vastly different: a quiet, peaceful, almost bucolic and pre-urban environment.

It didn't take the occasional announcement in the International Gazette like the one at Christmas, 1908, which reported that "Robert Stevens is home from Cornell for the Xmas holidays", to convince the people of Black Rock that Riverside was different, a "better" neighborhood which symbolized a step-upward in their search for comfort and security.[28] For as Warner has written about the streetcar suburbs of Boston, there was in Riverside "the effect of omnipresent newness."[29] Not only were the homes newer, the streets cleaner and the air free of industrial smog, but the great majority of people who lived here were American born, an additional factor which when added to the area's newness, gave Riverside the image of success, the symbols of prosperity for which most inhabitants of the American city have long strived.

Writing in 1899 about the growth of suburbs in America, Adna F. Webber said that "the rise of the suburbs is what furnishes the solid hope that the evils of city life. . . may be in large part removed."[30] Certainly similar motives were behind Black Rock's encouragement of Riverside for it was clear from the actions of Black Rock leadership that they regarded Riverside as a safety-valve within the metropolis, an area whose existence meant that the people of Black Rock no longer had to accept the intrusions of an ever-expanding urbanized society.

Yet Black Rock's intense interest in Riverside suggests more than an escape from twentieth century urban life, what Warner has called "the general contemporary reaction to the growing industrial metropolis."[31] For like the Association's efforts following their organization to strength the roots of the local community, their cultivation of Riverside revealed the persistance of their faith in the small, clearly defined neighborhood community as a positive alternative to the amorphous and expansive metropolitan community with its far-away focal point downtown. Thus, in many ways Riverside offered Black Rock the opportunity to wipe the slate clean, to start over in newer and more pleasant surroundings, to duplicate here the semblance of independence and separation which had characterized the neighborhood in the days before the rapid expansion of the city, and as they had fought first as a rival town, then later as a subordinate yet proud section of the city, and now as a neighborhood eager to preserve its local orientation, the leaders of Black Rock fought to protect the development of Riverside. Thus, the spokesmen of Black Rock pampered their suburban garden and fought for its existence as increasingly more people from the older neighborhood sought homes here during the third decade of the twentieth century.[32]

CHAPTER VIII

BLACK ROCK AND THE CHARTER OF 1916: THE CLASH BETWEEN TWO DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE MODERN URBAN COMMUNITY

There is a direct connection between the Businessmen's Association's post-1905 definition of the neighborhood, their attitude toward Riverside and their resistance to the Charter of 1916, for all three of these events in the life of the neighborhood offer concrete evidence that in spite of the longer and larger shadows cast by the "web of the metropolis," there survived in Black Rock a strong and vibrant committment to the neighborhood community. By fighting the Charter of 1916 Black Rock defied the admonition of the downtown protagonists of metropolitanization that there was no choice for the neighborhoods of the city but to accept downtown's prescriptions for the governance of the city.

Of all the developments of the late nineteenth and twentieth century city none did more to strengthen the power of downtown at the expense of the neighborhoods than the system of at-large political representation. In the days before the city was linked by an intra-urban railroad and rapid transit network, the ward system of representation was best suited to the social geography of the city. Since the mid-nineteenth century city was a patchwork of separate neighborhood entities the government of Buffalo since its incorporation in 1832 had functioned more as a federation of separate neighborhoods rather than as an integrated metropolitan whole. Yet as the city grew and metropoli-

tan trends accelerated the downtown political and economic establishment in many cities throughout the country found that a system of government that placed ultimate political power in the wards was a threat to their downtown-oriented vision of the city. Thus, as the economic power of downtown increased throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century Buffalo's downtown establishment sought a commensurate increase in its political power by means of government centralization. Although coming more than twenty-years after similar attempts in Los Angeles and in Springfield, Massachusetts, Buffalo's Charter of 1892 was the first attempt by downtown reform elements to take power away from the wards by creating a bi-cameral city council with power divided between ward elected aldermen and at-large elected councilmen.[1] Discontent with this political balancing act was soon apparent and by the early twentieth century there was a city-wide movement for the creation of a commission government. After more than a decade of lobbying, the New York State Legislature in March of 1914 approved a commission charter for Buffalo which was to be voted on in a referendum to be held six months later.

The proposed charter, which if approved was to go into effect on January 1, 1916, was similar to commission charters that had been adopted in other medium-sized cities throughout the country during the initial twenty years of the century. Under it a council elected at large, consisting of four commissioners and a mayor, was the whole government. All of the traditional checks and balances, the separation of powers into legislative and executive branches, were abandoned as all power was concentrated in the hands of this one governing board. The council levied the taxes, voted the appropriations, enacted and enforced the laws and administered the public services. In short,

the commission superintended the entire administration of the city's business. Its five members were the only elected officers of the city as all others were either abolished or made appointive by and subservient to the Commission.[2]

The Charter, however, did contain some clauses which were calculated to soften the centralizing tendancies of the commission, namely the provisions for referenda. Thus, a referendum could be called at which time the voters could reject any councilmanic legislation within thirty days of its passage. Similarly, the Charter provided that no franchise dealing with the use of the streets or the provision of public services would go into effect until a referendum of the people at large had approved it. Thus, while there was no provision for the recall of officers, or for the iniative, the call for referenda in matters of legislation and franchises were efforts to provide some measure of direct democracy in what was otherwise a highly centralized and concentrated system of government.[3] Yet even this was a city-wide rather than a localistic measure.

In addition to the increased centralization of city government, another major goal of the Commission advocates was the depolitization of local government. In an attempt to "take politics out of government" the Charter insisted that all candidates for the office of commissioner be nominated by petition, that their names be alphabetically listed on the ballot instead of by the usual party designations and that they be selected at non-partisan primaries.[4] With these lofty goals in view - a centralized and efficient allocation of power and the removal of partisan considerations from government - the proponents of commission government launched a well-financed public campaign to win the support of all Buffalonians.

The coalition which mobilized the campaign for the Commission Charter in the Fall of 1914, had been active supporters of municipal reform since the early years of the century. While the Committee for the New Charter, the catch-all committee behind much of the pro-Charter campaign, smacks of the business orientation which Weinstein and Hayes have found behind commission campaigns in other cities, it was sufficiently bi-partisan and broadly based so that it avoided overt identification with business interests.[5] Yet throughout most of the early years of the century there was little doubt but that business, newspapers and the downtown establishment in general, were the most persistent and articulate advocates of reform through centralization.

As early as 1903 the Chamber of Commerce, pondering a change in local government, formed the Municipal Affairs Committee.[6] Other groups also demanded changes and three years later the Buffalo Municipal League urged a strengthened city executive and Mayor John Adam, a Democrat and wealthy dry-goods merchant, appointed a Charter Revision Committee.[7] Adams' view of a well-governed municipality complements the Weinstein-Hayes theory of municipal reformers for, as one of his speeches before the Common Council suggests, his major concern was business-like efficiency: "You well know that if a businessman were to endeavor to run his own business in the way it is possible under the existing charter to run the city's business and in fact, the way parts of it are run even now. . . it would be a very short-time until the businessman found himself embarrassed with the business confusion and bankruptcy awaiting him at a point not far off."[8]

The Charter's appeal was not limited to the business community. Indeed, it is hard to exaggerate the compelling attraction that reform through commission held for the broad spectrum of downtown opinion so

that by 1914 there was not one downtown newspaper, civic or business group which had not endorsed the commission charter. Both the Democratic Courier and the Republican Evening News championed its cause in strident editorials which began to appear almost daily as election day, 1914, drew near. Citing a new tax rate "which will draw new industries and thousands of people who cannot now afford to come here and pay our taxes," the Central Council of Businessmen and Taxpayers and the Buffalo Real Estate Association endorsed the Charter as a panacea for the city's ills.[9] Both Charles Whitman, the Republican candidate for Governor and Martin Glynn, the Democratic incumbent, supported it as did Chauncey Hamlin, a wealthy Buffalo lawyer and the Progressive Party's candidate for Lieutenant Governor, and a host of other downtown bankers, lawyers, businessmen and politicians of all political persuasions. And while the American Federation of Labor remained impartial during the debate which raged throughout the Fall of 1914, the support of the Central Labor Union, the largest labor federation in Buffalo, dispels the notion that reform through the creation of a commission government was an elitist plot.

These downtown advocates of the commission charter had no patience with their adversaries and from the beginning there was a Messianic quality to their campaign. Predicting the continuation of "Hell" if rejected and the coming of "Heaven" if passed,[10] the proponents of change were satisfied to brand their opponents as "self-interested ward heelers" in cahoots with the streetcar companies and other shady despoilers of democracy: "If you shake hands with a member of the Aldermanic Ring", said one pro-charter spokesman, "you'd better count your fingers when you get your hand back."[11] As election day grew nearer the rhetoric of the charter advocates escalated: "Every politi-

cian and ward heeler and gang leader is against the Charter . . . The Commission Charter will protect the good people from the bad. . . it will mean the survival of the fittest as well as the greatest efficiency for all citizens."[12]

In addition to these moralistic and quasi-Darwinian references, the exponents of the commission charter had many substantive and well-intended reservations about the existing ward system of representation, criticisms which had their roots in the latter part of the nineteenth century when under-populated wards like Black Rock's twelfth, had had an inordinate amount of power on a badly imbalanced and hardly representative Board of Alderman. The following editorial is typical of the seriousness of the problem as perceived by the Buffalo Evening News:

> There has long been a widespread and growing dissatisfaction with the complexity and cumbrousness of our unwieldy city government. The common council system has generally been adjudged a failure. . . Graft and corruption have been repeatedly charged and not infrequently exposed. Indeed, the organization of our municipal government has been such as to encourage inefficiency and corruption - decentralized, irresponsible, with divided powers and responsibility, innumerable elected officials with the consequent dissipation of elective control, ward representation, with its petty wrangling, its factional jealousies, and its invitation to corporate interference and control - all these have been characteristics which have resulted from the old common council system.[13]

Typical also of the pro-commission camp was the belief that the end of the ward system would result in a lower and more equitibly collected real estate tax. While the effort to promote the Charter led to a good deal of distortion on this point - on one day the Courier wrote that since 1910 the tax rate had increased $4 per $1000 valuation, while two days later the Buffalo Real Estate Association said that the

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increase had been $8 - there is no doubt but that high taxes were a source of anger to both businessman and working man. Thus, people as diverse as Vincent Roth, president of the Cetnral Labor Council, and H. A. Meldrum, president of the Chamber of Commerae, supported the Charter for similar reasons. While Roth endorsed it because "the Commission Charter represents the only way the rank and file of the working people of Buffalo will get relief from the high rents and high taxes", Meldrum, citing Galveston and Trenton, other cities with commissions, said that "the greatest gains in these cities since the advent of commission government has been the collection of taxes. Nothing could have been looser than the methods of collection under the ward-aldermanic regime. . . Now every possible corner of these cities operating systems is being watched with care both to increasing income and decreasing expenses. There is no miracle about this. It simply means that for the first time the cities are operating by businessmen on a business basis."

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Thus, armed with their firm conviction of the justice of their cause, the advocates of the Commission, under the bipartisan banner of the Committee for a New Charter, took their campaign into every neighborhood, every social club and businessmen's association in the city. Even the war in Europe could not keep the Charter campaign off the front pages and daily during the last two weeks of October, 1914 there were stories of scandals - some accusing the aldermen of paying inflated prices for municipal properties, others accusing Alderman Sullivan of the Irish First Ward of being on the payroll of the traction company and still others attributing to Mayor Fuhrman a plan to sell Delaware Park as a means of raising revenue - balanced with headline endorsements of the Charter: "Four Hundred People at Jefferson Avenue

Jewish Center Cheer Charter";"Mass Meeting At Schwann's Hall Great Pro-Charter Spokesman", and so on. Indeed, to read the newspapers of this period one is left with the distinct impression that with the exception of a few corrupt ward politicians, there was no anti-Charter sentiment anywhere in Buffalo. For not only was there an apparent unwillingness to publicize anti-Charter opinion, but more importantly, the exponents of the Charter were so convinced of the righteousness of their cause that it was difficult for them to believe that well-intended people might be opposed to the Charter. For to its supporters the Charter was more than just governmental reform; it was rather something with presumed curative powers, which like the other improvements so recently desired by the downtown establishment, would enable Buffalo to keep pace with other faster growing cities in the country. First there had been the Pan American Exposition, then the futile efforts to build a Union Station which if completed would have made Buffalo like all the "modern, prosperous and progressive cities of the world [who] have built, are building, and are planning to build Union Stations."[16] Having failed to secure the desired results through these measures - a city which "shall favorably impress all comers. . . and bring more and more such comers to aid in building it up"[17] - downtown boosters turned to commission government. For didn't a commission government "make a new city out of Jersey City", asked the Courier?[18] Didn't it result in "contentment and exultation" in Des Moines, "now rejuvenated and heralded far and wide as the best governed city in the country"?[19] Thus, convinced of the validity of their own rhetoric and desperately seeking answers to the larger problems of the city while hoping to refurbish its image, the downtown spokesmen for change were unable and unwilling to understand the depth of the opposition to

the Charter in the neighborhoods of Buffalo. They, therefore, could only insinuate the worst. It was, thus, the "waterfront wards" - that is, the Irish sections of South Buffalo - who were against the Charter because "they are in the death-lock grip of Sullivan and Costello, two of the strongest ward bosses in the City."[20] According to the Evening News, the German sixth ward opposed it solely out of loyalty to Mayor Fuhrman, the Democratic incumbent of German origin who, since his election in 1910, had been against any tampering with the ward system.[21] And it was mere partisanship and ethnic loyalty, a vote of thanks to Mayor Fuhrman for having appointed Francis Fronczak, a Pole, as Commissioner of Health, that led the Polish tenth ward to oppose the Charter.[22]

The newspapers were correct in predicting that these neighborhoods - the first, second and third wards along the waterfront, the sixth and tenth wards on the German and Polish East Side - would vote against the Charter. After all these were places where the ward system of representation had provided the largely foreign born population here with the only political leverage they had ever enjoyed. But when the votes were in it was clear that in addition to these ethnic neighborhoods there was strong anti-Charter sentiment in Black Rock, too, where a great percentage of the largely American and Republican residents were unwilling to accept downtown's prescription for the ills of the city. Thus, while only 21,668 voters in the city-at-large, or 36% of a total of 59,553, voted against the Charter, 1,152 people, or 45% of the total electorate of 2,504 in Black Rock's twenty-first ward,* voted against the Charter.[23] And in Black Rock alone, Tovey

* Black Rock's ward, originally the twelfth, had become the twenty-fifth in 1892 and renumbered the twenty-first again in 1907.

reported, the Charter was resoundingly defeated by an overwhelming majority of the voters.[24] Throughout the entire ward the highly favored Charter received a majority of only 206 out of a total vote of 2,304.[25] Although there is no way of checking votes below the ward level, Tovey was most likely correct in his estimation that "the greatest number of nays came from Black Rock and not Riverside" where there were many people who voted for the Charter because of their belief that the franchise referendum was their best guarantee against the further development of streetcars there.[26] That 45% of the whole ward and a good deal more than that in Black Rock voted to preserve the ward system indicates that opposition to the Charter was produced not by the manipulation of an unsophisticated electorate by ward bosses, as the downtown newspapers suggested, but resulted rather from basic questions which went to the heart of the neighborhood's perception of itself and its relationship to the rest of the city.

In order to best understand the depth of Black Rock's opposition to the Charter of 1914, the issue must be seen in the perspective of the preceeding twenty-five years, a time during which the political power of the neighborhood had been consistently and persistently assaulted by political reforms which concentrated increasingly more power downtown in City Hall. Despite a change in ward boundaries in 1907 which made Black Rock's ward smaller by drawing its eastern boundary at Delaware Avenue instead of at Delavan Avenue and Main Street and, thereby, increasing Black Rock's power in the ward, the power of the neighborhood vis a vis the city had been on a steady decline since the inception of at-large representation in 1892, an innovation that ended the hey-day of ward power.[27] Between 1875 and the Charter of 1892 the voters in each ward had annually elected two aldermen and two county

supervisors. Also during this period of neighborhood power, the ward had been divided first into three, then later into six election districts, each with its own election supervisor chosen by the ward at large. Appointed by City Hall but nevertheless directly accountable to the ward, were two street and health inspectors and a District Health Physician. Finally each ward had a local constable responsible for local police matters. Thus, during this fifteen year period Black Rock's ward often had as many as fourteen men, ten elected by them and four appointed by City Hall, who were directly and visibly responsible for the workings of the ward, of which Black Rock was the most populous and important section. The power of the neighborhood was thus great for with the exception of one of the two annually elected supervisors who came from the eastern section of the ward, all of the above mentioned officials had come from Black Rock.[28]

However, much of Black Rock's disproportionate amount of power was taken away by the Charter of 1892. The Common Council had become a bicameral body with power roughly divided between a Board of Alderman elected by the ward and a Common Council elected by the voters-at-large. Similarly, the Charter substituted ward-elected street and health inspectors for inspectors chosen at-large and did away with ward selected election supervisors. Ward and neighborhood power was reduced still further by the elimination of one of the two county supervisors.[29]

Black Rock felt the results of the Charter of 1892 immediately: of the nine councilmen elected at large in the new Common Council and of the fourteen health inspectors chosen at-large between 1893 and 1914 not one came from Black Rock.[30] One year after the Charter passed, Black Rock's twenty-fifth ward was left with only two elected officials

- an alderman and a supervisor - and the number of officials directly responsible to the ward was also reduced to two: a constable and a district physician. With no referendum and little fanfare a major upheaval in Buffalo politics had occurred.

Yet even these changes had left Black Rock with a vestige of its former power. With the exception of the five years between 1900 and 1905, the five years during which the Businessmen's Association did not meet, all the aldermen from the ward up to the inception of commission government in 1916 had come from Black Rock rather than from the eastern sections of the ward or, after the ward boundary changes in 1907, from Assumption or Riverside. The neighborhood, thus, had been left some degree of direct representation in city government. However, Black Rock had not fared well under the at-large system of representation. Indeed, since that innovation in 1892 no one from the neighborhood had even run for an at-large position let alone be elected. . . a clear indication of how Black Rock's political ideas were a direct reflection of their local orientation.

The general erosion of the political power occurring during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was accompanied by still another challenge to the authority of the neighborhood in the form of large, absentee-owned franchise monopolies which had come to exert an increasing amount of control over neighborhood services. Alfred Tovey had always been aware of this threat and from the beginning had been critical of the powerful traction companies who sought to expand their lines into the neighborhood regardless of need. The Association had been disbanded for two years when in 1902 the International Traction Company acquired control of all of Buffalo's rapid transit lines in addition to ten other railway and bridge systems in Erie and Niagara Counties.[31]

Although there was then only one street car line in Black Rock - the Niagara Street line - Tovey sensed that the monopolization of transit services constituted a threat to the concept, if not the reality, of local power and in an editorial accused the Common Council and the Aldermen of "surrendering the interests of the people to the traction giants" and the Company of running "a slippery and double-dealing monopoly, a choking octopus" which dominated local government and "threaten/ed/ democracy everywhere."[32] Whereas Tovey had earlier taken the street railway companies to task for their dangerous and indifferent service, he now perceived the problem in political and ideological terms and opposed the traction merger as a still further erosion of local power to outside, or downtown, interests.

Following its reorganization in 1905 the Businessmen's Association joined the gadfly editor of the Gazette in his criticism of the traction company and in 1906, in a startingly reversal of their earlier partisanship toward large companies, Association President Richard Humphrey said that "There is no hope that Buffalo will ever be free from the control of corporations under the present system of awarding contracts or that the affairs of the city will ever be conducted economically or honestly unless there is a restriction on the time limit of franchises."[33] On Humphrey's motion, the Association unanimously resolved that all city-awarded franchises be limited to twenty years.[34] Later in the year they went still further. Noting the ease with which the Iroquois Lighting Company had received a franchise to provide the city with electricity, the Association passed and the Gazette supported a resolution calling for a city-owned and operated electric power plant. Saying that the "street railways and the large manufactories" get power at cheaper rates than the consumer, they called on

Alderman George Striker to introduce a bill providing for municipal ownership of an electric power plant.[35] The growing sensitivity of the Association and the Gazette to the surrender of neighborhood power during the early twentieth century had, thus, prepared them for the still greater challenge of the Commission Charter.

The anti-Charter campaign in Black Rock was spear-headed by the Black Rock Businessmen's Association, which, having overcome the metropolitan aspirations that had led them to accept the principles of the Charter of 1892, in October, 1892 organized the Black Rock Committee to Retain the Present Charter.[36] Consisting of William Humphrey, the ward's alderman and son of the Association's president; Alfred Tovey, who as editor of the Gazette had broken with the Association over their support of the Charter of 1892; Conrad May, a Niagara Street clothing merchant and former officer of the Association; Charles Boine, a Niagara Street paint merchant; and Father Joseph Hoffmeyer, the pastor of St. Francis, whose presence on the Committee suggests the depth of the neighborhood's opposition to the Charter.[37] It is important to note that most, if not all of these men were Republicans. Charles Boine was the Chairman of the ward's Republican committee while Humphrey was the only Republican alderman in Buffalo to oppose the commission charter. While the pro-Charter movement had broad bi-partisan support, because of Mayor Fuhrman and the powerful, anti-Charter Democratic aldermen, opposition to it in the city-at-large was more acceptable within the Democratic Party. The opposition of these Black Rock Republicans then, is all the more meaningful in view of the strong Republican identification with the commission charter.

Like earlier battles waged in the interests of the neighborhood, the fight against the Charter was a two-pronged assault waged in

the press by the Gazette and in the streets by the Association. Starting in mid-October, Tovey's paper ran a series of editorials in which he attacked the commission idea as a violation of local power. That of October 11 was typical:

> Every person, even the friends of the plan, must concede that in the abolition of the ward system the representation of the people will be greatly reduced and the spirit of American democracy in the administration of the City will be seriously curtailed. . . To the heads and hands of the commissioners will be confined a mighty power over the people of the City. They are to employ all the officers and employees of the City; they are to rule over everything that the City now possesses or in the future may possess; they are to control the order, morals and progress of the City. Everything will depend on them. Only a sober thought is necessary to perceive and comprehend the enormous power that would rest in their hands. [38]

Tovey was unimpressed with the provisions for a referendum: "There is no security in the referendum. Will it not occur to all that the people will tolerate many, many abuses from the honorable commission before they reach out for their means of defense. A much greater security is enjoyed by the people in a larger representation and less power in a council elected from different wards. The curtailment of representation proposed in the charter is a measure fraught with dangers and followed to its ultimate logical conclusion, must lead us to autocracy." [39]

While Tovey hammered away in the press, the Association, with all traces of its metropolitanism gone, worked through their Committee to mobilize the neighborhood against the Charter. In addition to several open Association meetings, the Businessmen, with the cooperation of Father Hoffmeyer, held a mass meeting "for all residents of Black Rock" on election eve, November 1, 1914. The rally at St. Francis was an

important event in the life of the neighborhood. The plans and preparations were unprecedented. Never before had the Church been used for a political purpose and never before had one issue so monopolized the pages of the Gazette and the Minutes of the Association. For two weeks prior to the meeting, the newspaper ran headline reminders of the time, place and purpose of the meeting, while the Association was preoccupied with making necessary arrangements: contacting the speakers, arranging for a janitor to keep the church open and most of all, effort was spent to spreading the word through the individual members.

The depth and sincerity of their opposition to the Charter was apparent in the speeches which were made before the assemblage of over 400 people. The tone of these speeches is crucial for while Mayor Fuhrman and the other opponents of the Charter said little about the ward system and chose to concentrate their attack on the centralization of power and the loss of local power which would result, the opponents in Black Rock were unabashed defenders of the ward system as the last and best hope for the preservation of the neighborhood concept. Great concern was expressed over the impact the loss of local ward representatives would have on the nature of neighborhood life. Alderman Richard Humphrey, for example, opposed the Charter because "A commission cannot know as accurately as the representatives of the people what is the will of the people. The commissioners will not, as I do, live among my constituents. He will not be familiar, as I am, with the everyday problems and needs of the people." [40] Charles Boine who as Republican leader of the ward put his political life on the line by opposing the Charter warned: "Gone will be the days when your representative walked among you on the streets of your neighbor-

hood, sent his children to learn and play with your children. Gone, in sum, will be the days when as one of you, your alderman fought for you in the halls and corridors of City Hall. Do not allow them to take from you your old rights; rather let us fight to increase and add new ones to them."[41] Conrad May, a director of the Association, added to the wistful cries for the preservation of the ward system: "Is it only the small towns and cities of our nation that will still belong to the citizens? Is it only there that a sense of personal relationship between the taxpayer and the tax taker will exist? I say no. Every year has brought so-called advances which have done nothing but eat-away at the power of the people. If we are to reverse this autocratic patter which is taking place before our very eyes, we must destroy forever the notions of the new Charter and its call for commission government."[42]

These speeches provide clear indication that the aldermen symbolized far more than neighborhood political power; indeed, they appear to have been integral parts of the structure of life in Black Rock. They were all of the neighborhood, well-known to all and highly visible. This close relationship between the aldermen and their constituents - far more important than their relationship with their federal representatives whose names appear in the pages of the Gazette and in the Minutes of the Association only at election time - was a vital component of Black Rock's consciousness as a neighborhood.

Similarly, these speeches cannot be read without noticing the extent to which the men of the Association had come to deviate from their earlier held visions of the place of the neighborhood within the metropolitan complex. Whereas fifteen years earlier they could not have refused the opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity with the

metropolitan goals of downtown's progressive leadership, the events of recent years - the blossoming of Black Rock's neighboring instincts, the sharpening of the neighborhood's identity as a result of the growth of Assumption Parish and Riverside, and most particularly, the realization that the continued spread of a downtown oriented metropolitanism jeopardized the neighborhood's interests and its way of life - led them to oppose what the great majority of Buffalonians believed was in the best interests of the city.

Thus, the arguments over the Charter of 1916 posed deep questions about the nature of modern urban life, for behind all the rhetoric was not only a power contest between downtown and the separate neighborhoods, but also a contest between opposing views of urban life: between the advocates of the city as one harmonious, metropolitan community with downtown as the focus of all radiating avenues of power, influence and control; and the far different view from the neighborhoods which saw the city as a patchwork of separate and distinct local communities. As old as the city itself, these contrary views of the urban community had been at loggerheads throughout the nineteenth century as the steady outward push of the city, aided by political and technological innovations, drew the separate enclaves of power and community within the ever-expanding web of downtown. But never before had the battle lines between the neighborhood's view and the view from downtown been as sharply drawn, the issues as sharply defined as they were in 1914. For now it appeared to all who looked, that coexistence between the neighborhood community and the integrated metropolis was impossible. Indeed, the advocates of the Charter were as eager to erode the psychology of localistic orientation as they were its political power. The Committee For the New Charter constantly complained "That the present

ward system of representation is inconsistent with the best interests of the city. . . under it the city is made servant to the ward while the reverse is the only policy that should exist if we are to expect quality, justice and progress in Buffalo."[43] Fortified by their belief that what was good for downtown was good for the rest of the city, eager to advance a modern and progressive image of the city as a unified and metropolitan whole, these liberal advocates of metropolitan homogeneity also had an abiding faith in the acculturation of the city's foreign population and, therefore, believed that the existence of separate geographical and ethnic enclaves were simply not desirable. This philosophy was aired in a talk by one of the Committee's spokesman to the Businessmen's Association in late October, 1914. Arguing that "the conditions in front of my property are not nearly as important as compared with the conditions of the streets of the city as a whole", he urged his audience to "Forget the East Side and the West Side. Forget that you are Black Rockers and Riversiders, Germans, Poles, Irish or Italian and vote on this question as Buffalonians."[44] Nothing could have fallen on deafer ears for by 1914 it was exactly this identity as "Black Rockers" and their vision of Black Rock as a separate and special community that meant more than anything else to the members of the Association and their constituents in the neighborhood. Now more than ever before these ideas were repugnant to Black Rock and like the other areas in the city with strong neighboring tendencies - the waterfront wards, the German and Polish east side and the Italian quarter on the lower West Side - the greatest proportion of people in Black Rock[45] voted to preserve the ward system and the neighborhood orientation that it symbolized.

Thus, it was far more than political arrangements that were upset

by the commission charter, but rather a whole, deeply-ingrained vision of the city which originated at the neighborhood level and extended only reluctantly to the city-at-large. Unfortunately, Black Rock's well-defined image of itself as a neighborhood came at a time when the forces of metropolitanization were everywhere triumphant.

CONCLUSION

THE PERPETUATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S MYSTIQUE

Every development of the early twentieth century city contributed to the erosion of the neighborhood. The dominance of downtown was visible everywhere. In the history books which ignored the developments of Buffalo's separate neighborhood enclaves; in the streetcar system which linked every corner of metropolitan Buffalo with its downtown core; in the new skyscrapers which housed large corporations controlling the city's economy; in the Charter of 1916 which by establishing commission government did away with the last vestige of neighborhood representation in the government of the city. However, in spite of this phenomenon the great majority of people in Black Rock consciously rejected the culture of downtown and chose instead to preserve a way of life that had far more meaning to them.

Yet before there emerged a well-organized and purposeful community dedicated to the perpetuation of the neighborhood community, the self-appointed, businessmen-leaders of Black Rock had to first overcome their own insecurity about their neighborhood. To these young merchants, born and raised in Black Rock, the neighborhood appeared anachronistic, isolated and apart from the compelling and prosperous downtown city, an afterthought in the council rooms of the downtown establishment. In their desire to change this perception of Black Rock's image, to present their neighborhood in the most progressive and contempo-

rary light, these local burghers took a page from the earliest of America's urban boosters. For as these men saw it, Black Rock's relationship to downtown Buffalo was similar to the relationship between frontier towns and eastern urban centers and even earlier, like colonial frontier settlements to the capitals of European colonialism. John Kouenhoven has described the latter as it pertained to the boosterish burghers of New Amsterdam and their countrymen in Holland in the middle of the seventeenth century: "To many people in Europe, of course, facts about New Amsterdam were of no importance. A completely fictitious view would do if it matched their ideas of what a city was."[1] And like those transplanted Dutchmen of the seventeenth century and the urban frontiersmen of nineteenth century America, the businessmen-leaders of Black Rock never lacked a scheme whereby they hoped to attract the opinion-makers of the downtown metropolis. However, their bold and often imaginative ideas failed not only to impress the downtown establishment but they also failed to alter the staunchily local orientation of the residents of Black Rock. Yet out of this failure there emerged a new perception of the neighborhood and in the first decades of the twentieth century the neighborhood community flourished.

Although the Black Rock Businessmen's Association did not choose to recognize it until 1905, a neighborhood orientation had been a characteristic of Black Rock ever since its annexation by Buffalo in 1855. A strong neighborhood outlook continued to prevail there throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for the demographic, economic and political upheavals which had had such a corrosive effect on other urban neighborhoods, had little impact on Black Rock.[2]

Demographically, the neighborhood had remained fixed as its

largely American and German-born population had never been overrun by new and different ethnic groups. More important than the stability of Black Rock's ethnic composition was the fact that the people of Black Rock tended to stay put in the neighborhood. This, far more than the ethnic persistence of the neighborhood, was the significant demographic factor behind the traditional strength of the local community.

The economic changes produced by industrialization similarly strengthened the fabric of community life. For one, with the exception of the Pratt and Letchworth steel company all of the factories in the area were located either along the Canal towpath or along the railroad tracks in Assumption Parish. Thus, industrialization of the neighborhood provided the benefit of steady employment and a short distance between home and work with a minimal amount of disruption to the life of the neighborhood. Even the Pratt and Letchworth plant, located as it was on the banks of the Scajaquada Creek, hardly intruded into the residential and business heart of the neighborhood.

Politically,too, Black Rock remained intact throughout the sixty-one years between annexation and the Charter of 1916. Although the neighborhood had lost one of its two aldermen following the Charter of 1892, Black Rock had never been gerrymandered. If anything, by the early twentieth century the political and legal boundaries of Black Rock's ward more closely resembled the boundaries of the neighborhood as perceived by Black Rock's residents than ever before. Even the transportation of the first metropolitan age - the electric streetcar, next to the automobile the most effective metropolitanizing agent in the history of the American city - had made only a small dent in the localistic structure of the neighborhood for until the 1930's there was but one line linking Black Rock with the rest of Buffalo. Thus, in spite

of the imperialistic nature of twentieth century metropolitan cultures, Black Rock - due partly to location, partly to the quirks of urbanization and partly to the conscious desire of its small population - continued as a vital neighborhood, a city within the city, touching the lives and commanding the sentiment of several generations of its residents.

Today the neighborhood community in Black Rock is but a shadow of its former self. A thruway has been cut through it, automobiles have carried its residents to stores and homes well beyond once suburban Riverside, while the construction of a large state college on its borders has brought large numbers of alien dwellers into its midst. Yet for those who still live in Black Rock there is a mystique which continues to influence the residents' attitudes toward the neighborhood and the city-at-large. For when in the Spring of 1973 a Little Leaguer from the neighborhood cried to his teammate who had just come up to bat: "Show 'em what Black Rock can do" he reaffirmed the ties that have linked the people of this community since the early years of the nineteenth century.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1] New York Times, March 27, 1970; April 2, 1970; February 1,1971.

[2] Times, March 27, 1970.

[3] Clarence Ridley and Owen Nolling, eds., What The Depression Has Done To Cities. (Chicago, 1935).

[4] Blake McKelvey, The Emergence of Metropolitan America. (Brunswick, New Jersey, 1968), p. 103.

[5] See especially Robert Wood, Suburbia (Boston, 1958).

[6] Quoted in Times, December 13, 1972.

[7] Times, March 15, 1972.

[8] Times, March 7, 1972.

[9] Edward N. Costikyan and Maxwell Lehman, "Restructuring the Government of New York City" (March, 1972), p. 1. A report included in the State Study Commission for New York City, The Neighborhoods, The City And The Region: Working Papers On Jurisdication And Structure. (New York, January, 1973).

[10] Bar Association of the City of New York, "Decentralization of New York City Government," p. 1, in The Neighboorhoods, The City And The Region.

[11] Daniel P. Moynihan, "Comments on Restructuring The Government of New York City," (July, 1972), p. 2, in The Neighborhoods, The City And The Region.

[12] Sebastian Leone, Borough President of Brooklyn, Statement Made at Borough Hearing of Task Force on Jurisdiction and Structure February 24, 1972, p. 1, in The Neighborhoods, The City And The Region.

[13] Buffalo Evening News, August 10, 1972.

[14] News, August 10, 1972.

[15] News, August 10, 1972

[16] See article on College Point, Queens, in the Times February 1, 1970.

[15]Laux, p. 12.

[16]For material pertaining to the rivalry between Buffalo and Black Rock see the Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society, vols., XIII, pp. 387-388; XIV, 309-385; XXVIII, 290-291; V, 135-137; XII, 104-114. Niagara Frontier, vol. XV, p. 48; The Black Rock Beacon, XIV. Also relevant letters in the Porter Manuscripts in the Manuscript Collection of the B&ECHS.

[17]Laux, p. 7.

[18]Index To Streets, Etc., 1874-1896 (Bureau of Engineering, Buffalo, 1897) pp. 29-30.

[19]H. W. Hill, The Municipality of Buffalo, 1720-1923 (Buffalo, 1924), pp. 738-739.

[20]J. C. Barton, "Early Reminiscences of Buffalo and Vicinity," PBHS, I, March 19, 1886 and Hill, p. 239.

[21]The Black Rock Advocate, January 8, 1937.

[22]Hill, II, p. 251

[23]International Gazette, June 17, 1894.

[24]The main problem in estimating the population for Black Rock in 1855 is that the census for that year does not list people by street but rather by wards. Thus, the whole twelfth ward is listed as one unit. However, by checking the names of those listed in the Census with those listed in the City Directory for 1855 I was able to approximate at what point in the census the listings for Black Rock began and ended. The number arrived at - 1400 - is, thus, an estimate, but given the available date, as close as possible to an accurate figure. See the Manuscript of the Federal Census, 1855 in the Record Room of the Erie County Building, Buffalo.

[25]Census, 1855. Larry Glascoe, Ethnicity & Social Structure: Irish, Germans and Native-born in Buffalo, 1850-1860. Manuscript of PhD. dissertation, SUNYAB, 1973, chapter I, p. 4.

[26]Glascoe, chapter 1, p. 9.

[27]Of all the census manuscripts in County Hall the one for 1855 is unique in that it gives the length of time each person had lived in Buffalo.

[28]Manuscript of the Federal Census, 1855.

[29]Federal Census and the City Directory, 1855.

[30]Census, 1855.

[31]Census, 1855 .

[32]City Directory, 1855.

[33]Census, 1855.

[34]Census, 1855.

[35]Glascoe, conclusion, p. 1-2.

[36]Glascoe, p. 1-2.

[37]Glascoe, p. 1-2.

[38]Glascoe, p. 1-2.

[39]In 1855 only the first, eight, and ninth wards had more people employed in "industry other than agriculture" than did Black Rock. Census, 1855.

[40]Census, 1855.

[41]International Gazette, June 17, 1894.

[42]Gazette, July 14, 1901; February 21, 1909.

[43]In 1855 the United Evangelical Church had 500 members, Dearborn Baptist had 40, Riverside Methodist had 75, and St. Francis Xavier had 550. See Census of 1855.

[44]City Clerk's Manual, (Buffalo, 1916), p. 51.

[45]Larned, I, p. 346.

[46]Hill, I, p. 222.

[47]Black Rock Advocate, June 30, 1835.

[48]Advocate, February 4, 1837.

[49]Proceeding Of The Common Council Of Buffalo, June 2, 1954, p. 117.

[50]Hill, II, p. 482.

[51]City Directory, 1855.

[52]Directory, 1855.

[53]Directory, 1855.

[54]Directory, 1855.

[55]Census, 1855.

[56]Of all the manuscript censuses in County Hall that of 1865 is unique in that it records the city in which each person worked if different from the one in which he lived. Still thinking that Black Rock was sufficiently different from the rest of Buffalo, the enumerator in 1865 made an entry for each Black Rockite who worked in Buffalo. Of the eight people who did so, four were American born and four were German born; one of them was a lawyer while the rest performed the usual jobs: a carpenter, blacksmith, butcher, two teamsters, and a painter. None of them was a common laborer. An interesting family in the 1865 Census is that of Littleberry Moseby, the only black family in the area throughout the period covered in this study. Moseby made his first appearance in the Census in 1865 and never appeared again. He was born in Virginia in 1805, worked as a laborer and lived with his wife and three children in a $1500 home which he owned on Amherst Street near Military Road. All of his children, even the oldest - a twenty-seven year old man who worked in Wyoming County - were born in Erie County, clear indication of the length of time Moseby had been in the County, the Census of 1855 not withstanding.

[57]Census, 1875 and International Gazette, April 18, 1894.

[58]City Directory, 1865.

[59]Census, 1865.

[60]Proceedings of the Common Council, 1855-1875 inclusive.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER II

HOW CHANGES IN BLACK ROCK BETWEEN 1875 AND 1885 BROUGHT ABOUT A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

[1] International Gazette, March 16, 1886. Hereafter cited as I.G.

[2] Atlas of the City of Buffalo, vol. II, 1874 and 1884.

[3] Atlas of Buffalo, vol. II, 1884.

[4] Atlas of Buffalo, vol. II, 1884.

[5] I.G. March 17, 1892.

[6] City Directory, 1884 and I.G., June 11, 1901.

[7] Directory, 1885-1892; I. G., February 5, 1887.

[8] Directory, 1887-1889; I.G. May 21, 1891. Other companies which opened shop in the area during these years were the Buffalo Cooperative Stove Company at Amherst and Tonawanda; A. Cutler and Sons Furniture on Churchill; Buffalo Brass and Iron on Churchill; Empire Metallic Bed Company on Chandler; the Buffalo Weaving Company on Churchill. See the City Directory, 1887-1892.

[9] I.G., April 14, 1886.

[10] Buffalo Commercial Advertiser, June 18, 1887.

[11] City Directory, 1886-1891.

[12] I.G., July 14, 1889.

[13] I.G., May 12, 1888.

[14] I.G., May 19, 1888.

[15] City Directory, 1886-1891.

[16] I.G., March 16, 1888.

[17] I.G., May 19, 1888.

[18] Others founded after 1875 were the East Street Methodist in 1876; St. John the Baptist on Hertel and East in 1879; The Second German Methodist Church on East in 1884; The United Evangelical Church on Amherst and Thompson in 1885; the Grace Episcopal Church on Niagara and Ontario in 1885; and the Ripley Memorial Methodist Church on Dearborn in 1887. See City Directories for these years.

[19] City Directory, 1875.

[20] Directory, 1885.

[21] Directory, 1887.

[22] Directory, 1875.

[23] Directory, 1855-1875.

[24] Directory, 1885.

[25] Directory, 1886.

[26] City Directory, 1855-1860. Until 1880 the other alderman came from the Delavan and Main Street section of the twelfth ward.

[27] Posthumous mention of Howell, I.G., November 29, 1886.

[28] City Directory, 1865.

[29] Census, 1865.

[30] City Directory, 1875.

[31] Directory, and the Manuscript Federal Census, 1875.

[32] Directory, 1880 and Census, 1875.

[33] Directory, 1885 and Census.

[34] City Directory, 1855, 1875, 1885.

[35] A posthumous mention of Howell in I.G., November 29, 1886.

[36]I.G., November 29, 1886; City Directory, 1886.

[37]City Directory, 1881, 1883.

[38]Manuscript of the Federal Census, 1892. Minutes of the Association, April 1, 1886.

[39]Census, 1892; City Directory, 1875-1886; Census, 1875.

[40]Census, 1892 and 1855.

[41]Census, 1892 and 1855; City Directory, 1886.

[42]Census, 1892 and 1855; Directory, 1886.

[43]Minutes of the Black Rock Savings and Loan Association, January 3, 1895.

[44]Census, 1875.

[45]City Directory, 1886.

[46]Census, 1855 and 1892; City Directory, 1886.

[47]Census, 1875 and 1892; City Directory, 1886.

[48]Census, 1875, 1892; City Directory, 1886.

[49]Census, 1855.

[50]Census, 1866 and 1875.

[51]For the address see City Directory, 1878. For his business career see the obituary, I.G., September 18, 1909.

[52]Obituary, I.G., September 18, 1909.

[53]Census, 1875.

[54]City Directory, 1881.

[55]Census, 1866.

[56]Census, 1875; City Directory, 1886.

[57]Census, 1855.

[58]Census, 1866.

[59]Census, 1875.

[60]Obituary in I.G., April 23, 1907.

[61]Census, 1875.

[62]Census, 1892 and City Directory, 1886.

[63]I.G., March 16, 1886.

[64]Minutes of the Businessmen's Association, April 1, 1886. Hereafter cited as Minutes. Milton Kotler in his Neighborhood Government: The Local Foundations Of Political Life (New York, 1969), p. 4 offers a similar example from the present where historical precedent has formed the basis of contemporary neighborhood consciousness.

[65]Minutes, April 1, 1886.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER III

THE BLACK ROCK BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION SEEKS TO REDEFINE THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND ALTER ITS RELATIONSHIP TO DOWNTOWN BUFFALO

[1]City Directory, 1886.

[2]I. G., December 12, 1887.

[3]I.G., January 7, 1888.

[4]I.G., January 7, 1888.

[5]Buffalo Courier, February 15, 1888; March 22, 1888; March 29, 1888.

[6]I.G., November 9, 1888.

[7]Minutes, Black Rock Businessmen's Association, November 1, 1888.

[8]I.G., November 9, 1888.

[9]I.G., March 24, 1888.

[10]I.G., August 2, 1888.

[11]Courier, August 5, 1888.

[12]Courier, August 9, 1888.

[13]Minutes, August 13, 1888.

[14]Courier, August 26, 1888.

[15]Courier, August 28, 1888.

[16]I.G., September 2, 1888.

[17] I.G., April 10, 1886.

[18] I.G., May 6, 1886.

[19] I.G., June 17, 1891.

[20] I.G., March 3, 1887.

[21] I.G., March 10, 1887.

[22] I.G., March 17, 1887.

[23] Minutes, March 22, 1887.

[24] I.G., March 24, 1887.

[25] I.G., October 30, 1887.

[26] I.G., March 24, 1887.

[27] I.G., November 28, 1888.

[28] I.G., December 15, 1890.

[29] I.G., July 13, 1889.

[30] I.G., July 13, 1889.

[31] Minutes, August 2, 1889.

[32] I.G., September 30, 1889.

[33] I.G., September 11, 1889.

[34] I.G., December 9, 1890.

[35] I.G., February 18, 1890.

[36] I.G., February 25, 1890.

[37] Buffalo Express, February 26, 1890.

[38] I.G., December 27, 1890.

[39] Minutes, March 22, 1894.

[40] I.G., March 29, 1894.

[41] I.G., April 8, 1894.

[42] Courier, March 10, 1891.

[43] City Directory, 1880-1892.

[44] For the record of these improvements see Engineer's Index To Paved Streets, Sewers And Water Mains, Compiled by Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works, Buffalo, N. Y. 1914.

[45] Buffalo Courier, March 20, 1891.

[46] Other than newspaper accounts there appears to be no information on the Charter of 1891. As yet there has been no study made of this interesting event in the political life of the city.

[47] Minutes, March 21, 1891.

[48] I.G., January 22, 1891.

[49] I.G., January 22, 1891.

[50] I.G., February 14, 1895.

[51] I.G., February 14, 1895.

[52] I.G., February 21, 1895.

[53] See A. Strauss, Images of the American City, Glencoe, 1961, p. 200, for an interesting treatment of self-promotion and city plans. Writing about the promotion of city reputations, he noted that "Advertising and promotion were the very stuffs out of which a considerable number of American towns were fashioned." The point is well taken when applied to Black Rock. Robert Lusiak in his study of planning in Buffalo has shown the relationship between planning goals like the Union Railroad Station in 1905 and the attempt of business groups to enhance the reputation of Buffalo. Robert Lusiak, From the Grand Army Plaza to the Electric City: A Review of the Planning Heritage of Buffalo, New York, 1804-1920. Unpublished Master of Science in Social Science Project, January 1972, State University of New York at Buffalo, p. 65.

54 Atlas of the City of Buffalo, I, 1872 and 1884.

55 Gazette, April 11, 1891.

56 Gazette, April 11, 1891.

57 After his rejection by the Association, Tovey took up the Porter Square issue with Alderman Mang who introduced a resolution in the Common Council that there be an investigation by the Corporation Counsel, see the Gazette, January 21, 1891. The Council did not adopt Mang's resolution and the case dragged on until 1893 when the Porter Family finally received $25,000 from the Grand Trunk Railroad for the land, I.G., March 11, 1893.

58 Minutes, April 16, 1899.

59 Minutes, May 2, 1899.

60 I.G., May 9, 1899.

61 Courier, May 14, 1899.

62 I.G., February 21, 1895.

63 Minutes, 1896-1900.

64 Minutes, January 3, 1900.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER IV

THE COMPONENTS OF BLACK ROCK'S NEIGHBORHOOD ORIENTATION

[1]See Manuscript of the New York State Census, 1855, 1866, 1875, 1892, 1905.

[2]Census, 1892.

[3]Census, 1855 and 1905.

[4]Census, 1905.

[5]Size of manufactories and their date of establishment are in Franchises, Permits, Privileges Granted to the International Railway Company and Subsidiaries (Department of Public Works, Buffalo, 1913) p. 16. These were in order of their opening: Pratt and Letchworth, Tonawanda St. and the Creek, in 1884 Buffalo Cooperative Stove, Amherst and Tonawanda, in 1884 McKinnon Dash Company, Amherst and Kail, in 1886 Jewett and Company, Military and Tonawanda, in 1891 Acme Steel, Military and NYC RR, in 1896 Hard Manufacturing Co., Tonawanda and Wayne, in 1897 Standard Plaster, Tonawanda and Creek, in 1900 U.S. Hame Co., Tonawanda and the Creek, in 1902 Wood and Brooks Piano Co., Military and City Line, in 1902 Atterbury Motor Car Co., Elmwood and Hertel, in 1904 Buffalo Bag Co., Rano and Mayer, in 1906 Pierce Arrow Co., Elmwood and Great Arrow, in 1906 King Sewing Machine Co., Rano, in 1907 Auto Car Equipment, Elmwood and Hertel, in 1907 Fedder's Auto Radiator Factory, Tonawanda N. Amherst, in 1907 Buffalo Tube Factory, Rano, in 1907 Lippard Stuart Motor Car Co., Elmwood and Hertel, in 1908.

[6]City Directory, 1905.

[7]For a discussion of architecture and its importance in the image people have of their city, see Michael Frisch, Town Into City: Springfield, Massachusetts, and the Meaning of Community, 1840-1880. (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) pp. 145-156.

[8]City Directory, 1884.

[9]I.G., August 9, 1895.

[10]I.G., October 13, 1903.

[11] Kevin Lynch's The Image of the City (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), which deals with spatial orientation and spatial behaviour in the urban environment has suggested this approach. See also Marc Fried and Peggy Gleicher, "Some Sources of Residential Satisfaction in Urban Slums," Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 27, November, 1961, pp. 307-315 for study of the subjective organization os pace in the West End of Boston.

[12] Names were taken from the 1905 Manuscript State Census and traced back in the city directories over preceding decades. For example, Fred Stohl lived at 312 Dearborn Street in 1905. The City Directories for 1895, 1885, and 1875 showed him living in the same place. Stohl was not listed in any city directory between 1863-1866; therefore, I assumed that he came to the neighborhood between 1866-1875. The same process was followed for the other sixty-nine people in the sample for the 1905 Census.

[13] See the city directories for any year.

[14] For the addresses of the teachers at Public School 20 see the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education, 1910. (Buffalo, 1911) p. 112. Length of time at the school was determined by studying these reports since the 1880's.

[15] The City Directory for 1905 listed the following clubs and organizations in Black Rock for that year: The Black Rock Cycle Club, the Occidental Lodge of the Free Masons, Vistah Rbekah Lodge; the Amherst and the Dearborn Lodge of the Foresters of America, the North Buffalo Lodge of the Ancient Order of Foresters, Court of Black Rock of the International Order of Foresters, Court Porter of the IOOF, Court Niagara Companions of IOOF, St. John the Baptist and St. Francis Xavier branches of the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association, two branches of the Ladies Catholic Benevolent Association, St. John the Baptist's branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, The Black Rock Council of Catholic Benevolent Legions, Knights of St. George Commanders, the International Lodge of Knights of Pythias, the Pythias Lodge of Knights and Ladies of Honor, the Rock Circle of the Protected Home Circle, the Black Rock Lodge of Deutscher Harugari, Haffnungs Manner of Deutscher Harugari.

[16] Minutes, The Black Rock Savings and Loan Association, January 6, 1895.

[17] The Association that emerged in Black Rock was similar to the many volunteer associations which sprang up throughout the country during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. All members had to subscribe for not less nor more than five shares each with a par value of $200. Members of the Association were required to pay two dollars in the beginning for every share subscribed which served as a membership fee. After that they were to pay one dollar a month on each

share as "contributions" or dues to the Association. A member was entitled to borrow $200 for every share held and whenever two hundred dollars was accumulated in the treasury in the form of dues paid in, it was offered as a loan to the member bidding the highest premium for it. Minutes, January 9, 1895.

[18] Minutes, January 6, 1895 and Census, 1905.

[19] Minutes, January 6, 1895 and January 12, 1905 and Census, 1905.

[20] The names of the directors of the Association are taken from the Minutes, their occupation and addresses from the relevant city directories.

[21] See City Directories for these years.

[22] Directories, 1885-1925.

[23] Annual Statements of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church, 1900-1965, in the files of the Church.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER V

HOW PROXIMITY TO A NEW AND DIFFERENT
NEIGHBORHOOD AFFECTED BLACK ROCK

[1] Census, 1905, see Chapter I, footnote 24.

[2] Atlas of the City of Buffalo, 1894, vol. II, plate 24.

[3] City Directory, 1900.

[4] The sample was made up of a number of randomly selected non-Polish family heads who lived on the fourteen streets of Assumption Parish in 1905 (when possible six people from each nationality group on each street were selected). These people were then traced back in the City Directories or, when possible, to earlier census records for their year of arrival in the neighborhood and their last place of residence:

	in Black Rock before 1883	came from Black Rock	came to Black Rock from other areas in city, 1883-1905	no prior listing
U. S. born	11	8	51	14
Germans	3	9	54	18
Canadians	-	1	2	53
Irish	-	1	18	4
English	-	-	12	6
Hungarians	-	-	-	3

[5] Of the 75 building lots on Germain, 33 were now improved; of the 68 on Peter, 36 were improved; of 63 on Howell, 31 were improved; and of 65 on Bush, 28 were improved. Atlas of 1894, Vol. II, plate . Atlas, 1884, Atlas, 1884, Atlas, 1874, Vol. I, plate 25.

[6] I.G., August 9, 1887.

[7] I.G., October 4, 1887.

[8] See "Real Estate Transactions" column in I.G. Also, the title searches for any of these properties in the files of the Monroe Title Company, Buffalo, N. Y.

[9] I.G., May 8, 1887.

[10] I.G., December 9, 1887.

[11] I.G., September 15, 1887.

[12] I.G., September 29, 1889.

[13] I.G., November 23, 1888.

[14] I.G., June 18, 1889.

[15] Anna Skulicz, "The Rise of Buffalo Polonia," Unpublished Senior Thesis, History Department, University of Buffalo, 1951, p. 8.

[16] Stephen Gredel, "People of our City and County," Adventures in Western New York History, (Buffalo, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, April, 1965) p. 13.

[17] "St. Stanislaus Special Edition," Am-Pol Eagle (Buffalo, July 26, 1963),p. 8

[18] Am-Pol Eagle, July 26, 1963, p. 8.

[19] Gredel, p. 10.

[20] Interview with Ray Marciniak, long-time resident of Assumption Parish at his home at 198 Military Road, June 19, 1971.

[21] Golden Jubilee Publication of Assumption Parish (Buffalo, 1938), p. 3.

[22] The number of boarders and the average family size were computed from the Census of 1905. Number of congregants at Assumption can be found in the record books of the church at 435 Amherst Street.

[23] See real estate column in I.G.

[24] Annual Report of the Charity Organization Society, 1905 (Buffalo, 1906),p. 132. The tenement law of 1901 defined a tenement as a building occupied by three or more families living independently. Property owners in the area can be found in the Tax Assessor's List for 1905. By comparing this list with the people enumerated in the Census of 1905 an accurate picture of property owning can be found. Using Amherst Street as an example, of 316 people living on the street, 183 owned their own home, an extraordinary number given the short time in the area.

[25]Census, 1905.

[26]Census, 1905.

[27]Annual Report of the Department of Health, 1905 (Buffalo, 1906), p. 114.

[28]City Directory, 1905.

[29]See cornerstone of St. Elizabeth's Hungarian Roman Catholic Church, 986 Grant Street. Same at St. John the Baptist Greek Catholic Church, 158 Germain St.

[30]Interview with Edward Rybacki, Jr., at his home at 498 Amherst, July 21, 1971.

[31]See files in Marriage Bureau, Buffalo City Hall. These are fairly complete from 1900 to the present, though scanty for earlier years. They are arranged alphabetically by year and list the names and addresses of both applicants for a marriage license.

[32]City Directory, 1904.

[33]Rybacki interview.

[34]Rybacki interview.

[35]Census, 1905 and City Directory, 1905.

[36]Interview with Ernest Zylimski, 88 Germain, July 15, 1971.

[37]Census, 1905.

[38]Census, 1905.

[39]Marriage Bureau Files.

[40]The Polish Album, (Buffalo, 1908).

[41]Polish Album, pp. 380-381.

[42]Polish Album, p. 401.

[43]Polish Album, p. 429.

[44]Polish Album, pp. 399-402.

[45]Interview with Msgr. Bogadski, pastor of Assumption Church, May 29, 1971. Bogadski is an extremely well-informed and up-to-date man as aware of the present as he is of the Polish past. Speaking of the relatively passive role of the Polish priest he compared him with the Irish priest in the movie Ryan's Daughter.

[46]Interview with Paul Trudnowski, 388 Kenmore Ave., July 18, 1971.

[47]Assumption Golden Jubilee, p. 4.

[48]Bogadski interview.

[49]Census, 1905.

[50]Buffalo Merchant's Exchange Annual Report, 1891, p. 54, quoted in Lusiak, Planning Heritage of Buffalo, p. 90.

[51]Robert B. Adam, "History of the Abolition of Railroad Grade Crossings in the City of Buffalo," Publication of the Buffalo Historical Society, VIII (1905), pp. 151-259.

[52]Minutes of Association, May 22, 1886; October 13, 1886; March 8, 1887; September 12, 1887; June 15, 1888; November 23, 1888.

[53]I.G., September 12, 1888.

FOOTNOTES — CHAPTER VI

HOW THE CONCERNS OF THE BLACK ROCK BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION FOLLOWING ITS REORGANIZATION IN 1905 REFLECT NEW AND DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

[1] Minutes, January 5, 1905. Census, 1905.

[2] Robert Wiebe, The Search for Order, 1877-1920 (New York, 1967), p. 40.

[3] Minutes, January 5, 1905.

[4] Minutes, March 7, 1892.

[5] I.G., November 28, 1905.

[6] I.G., December 6, 1905.

[7] Minutes, November 13, 1907.

[8] I.G., April 23, 1892.

[9] Minutes, March 13, 1907.

[10] Publication of the United Trade and Labor Council (Buffalo, 1905), p. 51.

[11] I.G., August 6, 1886.

[12] I.G., August 20, 1893.

[13] I.G., October 20, 1894.

[14] I.G., April 5, 1888.

[15] I.G., April 5, 1888.

[16] Publication of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Charity Organization Society (Buffalo, 1896), p. 4.

[17]The 15th Annual Meeting of the Charity Organization, p. 4.

[18]Minutes, June 27, 1905.

[19]Minutes, October 4, 1906.

[20]Minutes, November 19, 1906.

[21]Minutes, February 27, 1906.

[22]Minutes, December 8, 1905.

[23]Minutes, January 4, 1906.

[24]I.G., March 16, 1906.

[25]Minutes, November 17, 1907.

[26]Annual Report of the Board of Education, 1887 (Buffalo, 1887), p. 118.

[27]I.G., August 24, 1890.

[28]I.G., May 19, 1891.

[29]Minutes, November 7, 1898.

[30]I.G., January 13, 1899.

[31]Minutes, February 19, 1899.

[32]Letter in the I.G., March 24, 1899.

[33]Minutes, April 13, 1906, May 28, 1906, July 16, 1906, November 22, 1906, September 16, 1908.

[34]I.G., February 18, 1908.

[35]I.G., May 23, 1907.

[36]I.G., September 26, 1907.

[37]Minutes, March 17, 1905.

[38] Minutes, December 9, 1905.

[39] From all available records - the I.G., Association Minutes, and Police Department Annual Reports - it appears that juvenile delinquency had never been much of a problem in the neighborhood, however, real the Association's concerns may have been.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER VII

BLACK ROCK AND RIVERSIDE: THE SUBURBAN IDEAL AS AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT OF BLACK ROCK'S CONSCIOUSNESS AS A NEIGHBORHOOD

[1]Atlas of the City of Buffalo, 1874, pp. 104-105. One of them, John Crowley is listed in the City Directory as a resident of Niagara Street. There is no listing for Fred Hinckly the other large landowner at any time, strong indication that he was an out-of-towner given the Directory's reliability in listing prosperous men.

[2]I.G., July 19, 1895.

[3]See note 24, Chapter I. The same approach applies for Riverside.

[4]In the absence of a census for this year I have relied on the ration prescribed in the City Directory for 1885; that is 3¼ for every name in the Directory. Thus, 107 x 3¼ = 347.75 people.

[5]I.G., April 17, 1886.

[6]I.G., March 12, 1888.

[7]I.G., August 19, 1890.

[8]Atlas, 1894, I, Plate 6. The streetcar line turned east on Hertel off of Niagara, then proceeded north to the city line on Tonawanda. I.G., April 24, 1894.

[9]Atlas of the Streets, 1814-1895 (Engineer's Office, Buffalo, 1897). See also Index of Paved Streets, Sewers, etc. (Engineer's Office, Buffalo, 1914). Atlas, 1894. This figure is based on the ratio of 3.25 per name listed in the City Directory, 1895: 415 x 3.25 = 1378.75.

[10]Census, 1905.

[11]I.G., September 21, 1894; Courier, September 19, 1894.

[12] I.G., September 21, 1894.

[13] Minutes of BRBMA, September 23, 1894.

[14] I.G., October 5, 1894. There is no information available on the process of this decision. The Courier and the News simply mention the Commission's denial in a summation of the news from Albany. Courier, October 1, 1894; News, September 30, 1894.

[15] City Directory, 1909. The companies located in Riverside were the Wood and Brooks Piano Company, the Beaver Bed Co., P. G. Stephenson's Bed Co., and the Positive Clutch and Pulley Works.

[16] Minutes, March 8. 1909.

[17] Minutes, May 2, 1909.

[18] I.G., May 17, 1909.

[19] The rapid movement of people into Riverside during the early years of the twentieth century led to the construction of new churches here: The Ontarion Street Presbyterian in 1901 and the Riverside Church of Christ on Ontario and All Saints Roman Catholic on Esser, were both built in 1911. See City Directory for these years.

[20] See Cornerstone and the City Directory, 1905 for groups which met here.

[21] Minutes of the BRS&LA. Loans to Riverside homeowners from 1905 to 1915 were as follows:

1895-1900: 1	1906: 6	1912: 12
1901: 2	1907: 5	1913: 11
1902: 2	1908: 5	1914: 11
1903: 3	1909: 8	1915: 13
1904: 6	1910: 9	
1905: 6	1911: 10	

[22] I.G., April 11, 1908.

[23] Minutes, October 12, 1909.

[24] I.G., January 12, 1909.

[25] Minutes, December 19, 1909.

[26] Manuscript of the Census, 1915. A sample of 5 people was selected at random from the six most populous streets in Riverside: Ontario, Riverside, Crowley, Roesch, Tonawanda and Esser and traced back in the city directories to their last previous residence. Of the 30 people in the sample, 6 had last lived in Black Rock, 12 in Assumption, 10 in other places in the city and 2 had never before appeared in the directory.

[27] I.G., April 14, 1909.

[28] I.G., December 21, 1908.

[29] Samuel B. Warner, Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900. (New York, 1969), p. 156.

[30] A.F. Weber, The Growth of the Cities in the 19th Century (New York, 1899), p.475.

[31] Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, p. 13.

[32] Manuscript of the Census, 1925. A sample of 5 people was selected at random from the same six streets above and traced back to their last prior residence before coming to Riverside. The results were: 8 from Assumption, 16 from Black Rock, 5 from other sections of the city, and 1 with no prior listing. See City Directories, 1915-1925. The population of Riverside increased from circa 4800 in 1915 to circa 6200 in 1925. See Census, 1915 and 1925.

FOOTNOTES -- CHAPTER VIII

BLACK ROCK AND THE CHARTER OF 1916: THE CLASH BETWEEN TWO DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE MODERN URBAN COMMUNITY

[1]For a discussion of the attempt to consolidate municipal government in Springfield, Mass. in 1877 and in Los Angeles in 1871 see Frisch, Springfield, pp. 213-218; and Robert Fogelson, Los Angeles: The Fragmented Metropolis (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 209-210.

[2]City Clerk's Manual of the City of Buffalo, (Buffalo, 1916), pp. 13-25.

[3]City Clerk's Manual, pp. 13-25.

[4]City Clerk's Manual, pp. 13-25.

[5]S.P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," in Alexander Callow, American Urban History: An Interpretive Reader, (New York, 1969), pp. 421-438. See also James Weinstein, "Organized Business and the City Commission and Manager Movements," Journal of Southern History, XXVIII (1962) pp. 166-182. Further evidence that the commission movement had aspects of a business conspiracy to it are indicated in F. H. MacGregor, City Government By Commission (Madison, Wisc., 1911), p. 15. MacGregor writes that in the original draft of the 1901 Commission Charter for Galveston, Texas, the framers proposed that all five of the Commissioners be appointed by the Governor of Texas in the hope that this would deny old-line ward bosses their control over the large number of blacks and doc workers in the city.

[6]Lusiak, Buffalo's Planning Heritage, p. 75.

[7]Buffalo's Planning Heritage, P. 76.

[8]Buffalo Proceedings of the Common Council, 1909, p. 10. Quoted in Lusiak, p. 78.

[9]Courier, October 10, 1914.

[10]Courier, October 11, 1914.

[11]Courier, October 11, 1914.

[12]Buffalo Evening News, October 29, 1914.

[13]News, September 9, 1914.

[14]Courier, October 19, 1914; October 20, 1914.

[15]News, October 19, 1914.

[16]Report of the Chamber of Commerce Appointed to Consider the Question of a Union Passenger Station (Buffalo Chamber of Commerce, 1905). Quoted in Lusiak, p. 65.

[17]Lusiak, p. 65.

[18]Courier, October 18. 1914.

[19]News, October 20, 1914.

[20]News, October 25, 1914.

[21]News, November 5, 1914.

[22]News, November 5, 1914.

[23]Courier, November 5, 1914. The returns in the city were 38,486 for the Charter vs 21,668 against. In Black Rock's 21st ward the results were 1352 for vs 1140 against.

[24]I.G., November 9, 1914.

[25]Courier, November 5, 1914.

[26]I.G., November 9, 1914. It was typical of the Association that they showed not the slightest interest in organizing anti-Charter sentiment in Assumption, of which, given the large Polish population and the attitudes of Poles on the East Side, there was probably a good deal. However, Polish registration figures were sufficiently low - 186 in 1915 - that perhaps the Association didn't want to bother with the Parish. For registration figures see Official List of Registered Voters,1915, (Buffalo, Board of Elections, 1915). These figures are listed according to ward, name and street name, and number.

[27]Between 1854 and 1914 the boundaries and number of Black Rock's ward changed several times. Between 1854 and 1907 the boundaries were the same: the River on the west, the Creek on the south, the City Line on the north and Delavan and Main Street on the east. In 1904 the eastern boundary became Delaware Avenue, thus, making the ward considerably smaller. Between 1854 and 1892 Black Rock was in the 12th ward; 1892-1907 it was in the 25th ward and between 1907 and 1927 it was in the 21st ward. For this information see Buffalo City Directory for these years.

[28]City Directory.

[29]City Directory, 1892-1893.

[30]City Directory, 1893-1914.

[31]H. W. Hill, History of the Municipality of Buffalo, II, p. 491.

[32]I.G., September 11, 1902.

[33]Minutes, February 16, 1906.

[34]Minutes, February 16, 1906.

[35]Minutes, August 13, 1906; I.G., August 17, 1906. Municipalization was on the lips of many Buffalo politicians at this time and it was under the threat of public ownership that the Iroquois Lighting Company lowered its rates by 25% and the cost of installing a lamp from $74 to $55. Striker's bill never got on the floor of the Council. Courier, March 21, 1907.

[36]Minutes, October 12, 1914; I.G.,October 16, 1914.

[37]Minutes, September 12, 1914.

[38]I.G., October 11, 1914.

[39]I.G., October 11, 1914.

[40]I.G., November 2, 1914.

[41]I.G., November 2, 1914.

[42]I.G., November 2, 1914.

[43]Edward V. Hamilton, attorney, in Courier, October 19, 1914.

[44] I.G., October 19, 1914.

[45] Courier, November 5, 1914. Ward boundaries are in the City Directory, 1914.

FOOTNOTES - CONCLUSION

THE PERPETUATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S MYSTIQUE

[1]John Kouenhoven, The Columbia Historical Portrait of New York, (New York, 1972), p. 43.

[2]Milton Kotler, Neighborhood Government, pp. 18-19. Kotler cites South Boston and such Pittsburgh neighborhoods as Oakland, Bloomfield, and Lawrenceville as examples of neighborhoods which had fallen prey to the "imperial control of downtown" by the end of the nineteenth century.

Other Sources

Marriage Bureau Files, 1900-1920, in the files of the City of Buffalo Marriage Bureau, City Hall, Buffalo, New York.

The files at the Monroe Abstract and Title Corporation, 150 Pearl Street, Buffalo, New York.

Interviews:
1. Ray Marciniak, 198 Military Rd., June 19, 1971.
2. Edward Rybacki, Jr., 498 Amherst, July 21, 1971.
3. Ernest Zylinski, 88 Germain Street, July 15, 1971.
4. Msgr. Bogadski, Pastor of Assumption Church, May 29, 1971 at the church.
5. Trudnowski, 388 Kenmore Ave., July 18, 1971.